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THE POEMS OF WILLIAM COLLINS

Edited by Edmund Blunden

THE HASLEWOOD BOOKS

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WILLIAM COLLINS.

John Flaxman Esq.r R.A.

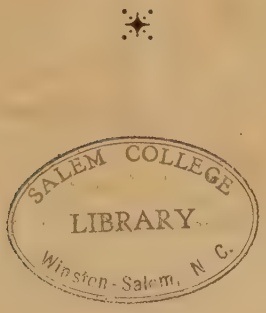
The POEMS
of
WILLIAM COLLINS

EDITED

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY STUDY

BY

EDMUND BLUNDEN



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PREFACE

MANY editions of Collins have appeared, and more are coming. With the present, which I believe will be thought worthy of the poet in its form, I have eagerly associated myself on grounds of long-standing enthusiasm, and observation of matters relating to Collins. In preparing the work, I have not permitted myself to do more than briefly touch in the discoveries of recent scholars of the subject such as Mr. H. O. White, from whom an exact and learned work on Collins is expected; I hope he may unearth the lost Odes; yet I had once or twice made the discoveries by myself. The text here is chosen with the desire to show the poetry without encumbrance and in its finest state, but more on this subject is contained in the Notes.

The friendly correspondents who have helped me include Lieut.-Gen. Sir C. H. Harington; Prebendary Teesdale of Chichester, who led the bicentenary of Collins there; Dr. E. J. Bicknell, the Librarian of the Cathedral; Mr. J. Isaacs of King's College; Bruce Richmond, Esq.; Mr. A. W. Evans, who lent me Dodsley's "Museum," a rare book; and Mr. J. S. Billingham, diligent in all that I could ask him to do for me.

16226

The frontispiece, new (so far as I know) to an edition of Collins, is copied from " Views Illustrative of Antiquities in Chichester Cathedral," published without date by Mason and Wilmshurst there. By the look of it I think that Flaxman drew it from a sketch of Collins; it accords with the engraving of Collins as a schoolboy, reproduced in the Aldine and Oxford editions, although that is full face, and this, profile.

E. B.

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A STUDY
OF WILLIAM COLLINS

A STUDY OF WILLIAM COLLINS

THE city of Chichester, in the county of Sussex, remains to this day a resting-place for antiquity and tradition, and may be said to be the most intimate relic of the life of William Collins that now exists; for, were he to return, he would see in it and round it the principal familiar environment of his early and late years. The Cathedral, the four streets meeting at the market Cross, the town walls, the serenity of the Pallants, the clear stream, the hills with their wind-twisted yews and junipers, their expanses of turf and burial-mounds, are not changed in their essential impressiveness. Moreover a traveller still receives the suggestion that this small city sixty miles from London retains its provincial independence, and keeps alive its humanities, its arts and trades with a detached contentment. No author of "Homes and Haunts" has made Collins a centre for his pen-pictures, but a walk in Chichester will be a means of knowing one poet better.

In his days, almost two hundred years since, Chichester was a still stronger municipal unity, noted and frequented for a number of things besides its Cathedral and other religious institutions. To some it was proverbial for its lobsters, others approved the cloth and needles which it made, its malting-houses were kept busy, and its beast-market was the biggest in Sussex or the adjacent counties. There were, too, several country gentlemen who thought "Collins of Chichester" a guarantee of a good hat.

William Collins, of Chichester, father of the poet, was bred a tradesman in the days of William and Mary; business was in

*his bones, and in becoming Mayor of the city he emulated at least one of his ancestors. He was not the manufacturer of hats, but the vendor. If he was pompous in manner, it was not an unbecoming trait for one who was Mayor three times. In his thirtieth year—*1703*—he married Elizabeth Martin, of a family similar in position to his own, which probably produced also the popular writer on scientific subjects—according to eighteenth-century requirements—Benjamin Martin; for he was a schoolmaster at Chichester. But Elizabeth's important relation was her brother Edmund, who was of near her own age. He had a commission in the Army, and must have been a man of high character, for in the following memoir he appears not only as a soldier of experience but as an exemplary brother and uncle. The children of William and Elizabeth Collins were Elizabeth, born in* 1704*; Ann,* 1705*; and, after a long interval, the gifted boy William. There is only tradition, but strong tradition, to say that William was born in his father's house (and place of business) at* 21 *East Street, Chichester, a few steps from St. Andrew's Church, on Christmas Day* 1721*. The house is not there now; a new bank building has overwhelmed it; in later years it had been the headquarters of a bookseller and publisher (William Blake's bibliography has contacts with Chichester) named William Hayley Mason.*

Mr. Alderman Collins and his wife thought that their son might enter the Church, of the dignities and honours of which they had many examples before them; besides, Mrs. Collins had a cousin, William Payne, who was a clergyman and scholar of some capacity, and might help a youth of promise. The boy was sent first—again tradition has never been refuted—to the Prebendal School, two or three minutes' walk from the hat-shop; thence to Winchester

College, a morning's ride away, on January 19th 1733. While he was there, Alderman Collins did not succeed in his affairs, and mismanaged also those of Colonel Martin with which he was entrusted. He died on the last day of 1734. The young poet's portrait was taken soon after the widowing of Elizabeth Collins, by an uncelebrated artist named Bellars. It has been reproduced several times, and in 1867 Francis Cunningham lent the original for an exhibition at South Kensington, but it has been concealed once more. Leigh Hunt comments on the face as "clouded, in the midst of its beauty, with a look of pride and passion. There is also a thick-stuffed look in the cheeks and about the eyes, as if he had been overfed." A fixedness not quite normal may also be discerned.

Had Collins received insufficient inspiration from the sculptured and learned past at Chichester, and the natural beauties and hauntings all about its walls, he must have made up for that at Winchester, where he was almost "a young monk." In Keats's day the city was scarcely less enjoyable, "the venerable and ancient Winchester"; and the pretty description of Charles Townsend in "Winchester," 1835, gives us Collins's environment. "You are still in the visionary presence of abbots and priors, with all their collegiate brotherhoods about you. It looks the undoubted abode of monastic communities; the stillness of the cell is felt, and hangs about every quarter of it; its High Street and place of frequence is solemnized by a Holy Cross of lofty and venerable architecture; you tread upon the foundation and fragments of ancient buildings in every open field and garden of the city; the few people you meet abroad, the quietness throughout the town, disturbed by no movements of trade or pleasure, preserve to every street an atmosphere of

devotion; the stillness of a daily Sabbath is upon them; the narrowness and obscurity of many of them give an impression not unlike the vague notion we have of the solitary dimness of cloistral residence. The low valley in which the city is placed, its rich meadows and its glassy streams of delicious water, speak of ecclesiastical abundance and enjoyment; and the very trout that are everywhere poised motionless in the river, or shooting their way, sportful or scared, through the green weed, seem to have a reference to Catholic days, and the obligations to peculiar food which the religious discipline of the place and the times required." Here, besides being ever aware of imaginative History, Collins must have become more of a dreamer than practical life permits. His master was Dr. John Burton.

The Muses revelled most
When Bigg presided, and when Burton taught.

Winchester had been fruitful in poets. Norris of Bemerton and Edward Young occur to me, but Collins was especially struck with the former presence of Thomas Otway,[1] *whose name and misfortune were mentioned at Chichester with the vividness of local connexion. More recently a verse exercise by a boy in the school, Robert Lowth, had been printed, and applauded; it was on the subject of the east window of the College chapel (" The Genealogy of Christ," 1729). Considerably senior to Collins was William Whitehead, destined for the Laureateship, and while Collins was*

[1] *Collins does not forget him in his Odes. Mr. Bruce Richmond informs me that a tablet to Otway at Winchester was erected by the Wartons and Collins. At Winchester in Seventh Chamber there is a tablet to Collins; and in more than one poem Lionel Johnson has shown him the fraternal affection of a Wykehamist.*

still a new boy Whitehead won a prize offered by the great Alexander Pope, who had a kindly zeal for encouraging young talent, for verses on a given subject. If Collins saw Pope again it was at Oxford, and certainly he would have sought the opportunity. The earliest line by Collins that survives is perhaps a memento of the competition in 1733; it comes from the lost "Battle of the Schoolbooks," and is quite in tune with Pope's work:

And ev'ry Gradus flapp'd his leathern Wing.

Of his schoolfellows some are well known. He lived long enough to see Hampton establish his name as translator of the Greek historian Polybius. John Mulso, afterwards prebendary of the cathedrals of Winchester and Salisbury, was one of his close acquaintances, and Collins must have known Hester his sister, who, as Mrs. Chapone, published the formerly indispensable "Letters on the Improvement of the Mind." But the best known is Joseph Warton, son of the Poetry Professor at Oxford, who "commenced a strict friendship with Collins which lasted till the death of that ingenious but unfortunate man." Through him Collins became acquainted with Thomas Warton, the younger brother, and Jane, the poetic sister, who had the misfortune to be crippled by rheumatism in early life, but shared the intellectual life of the group with unimpaired readiness. Joseph Warton and Collins were indeed school friends having the things of the imagination in common. A school essay by Warton looks like the groundwork of Collins's later Ode on the Passions, and Warton's early stanzas, "The Temple of Pity," resembled the latter part of Collins's Ode to Pity. There is in Thomas Warton's Latin poem of Winchester recollections a figure, which would serve for any of the three enthusiasts, of

the boy of finer insight who left the football and cricket while he made for the top of Catherine Hill, there to gaze round on yellow wheatfields, shadowed seas, the dim landmarks of far country, the blue shapes of the Isle of Wight, and nearer home the gray religious buildings among the foliage and the river's winding folds.

Collins's "English exercises were better than his Latin." He came at a time when schoolbooks were written in vigorous English, and were conceived not as injections of speedy omniscience but as kingdoms in which the mind could travel—the world displayed. He had the use, for instance, of Thomas Salmon's "Modern History," and the part of it which chronicled Persia induced him to write (at school) his "Persian Eclogues"—not merely a clever English exercise but a delicate series of idealizations, instructed by the "Messiah" Pastoral of Pope. Here he innocently joined the "literary impostors," for he writes, "If any of these beauties [of Persian style] are to be found in the following Eclogues, I hope my reader will consider them as an argument of their being original. I received them at the hands of a Merchant, who had made it his business to enrich himself with the learning, as well as the silks and carpets of the Persians." He perfects this little invention, with which may be compared that of Robert Dodsley a few years later, pretending that "The Oeconomy of Human Life" came from an Indian manuscript furnished by a gentleman resident in China. "Persian Eclogues" was a longish performance, but Collins also wrote songs of that calm country tone which he never lost. "When Phoebe formed a wanton smile" was sent in one cover with a piece by Warton, and a third by another schoolfellow, to the "Gentleman's Magazine" in 1739. *All were printed,*

under pseudonyms, that of Collins being signed very suitably "Delicatulus." In another early song we hear that "bell of peace" which had charmed him so long in Sussex solitudes, and was to sound on with placid insistency in his imagination. We see by these first verses of Collins that he already knew the more idyllic passages in Shakespeare.

On his final examination at Winchester, Collins was elected "first upon roll," Joseph Warton and John Mulso following. Winchester was the nursery for New College, Oxford, and Collins now should have passed there with the advantages of a "Fellow," or Scholar; but, as Johnson says, "unhappily there was no vacancy. This was the original misfortune of his life." In March 1740 he was entered a Commoner of Queen's College, and the same year went into residence with the support of his uncle Martin; his tutor, becoming "very sensible of his merits," improved his situation by obtaining for him one of the thirty Demyships at Magdalen College, surely with the help of Collins's relative, William Payne, Fellow of Magdalen. This advantage occurred in July 1741. At Magdalen Collins was, in the words of Sir Herbert Warren, "a genuine student," though inattentive to William Payne.

He found two earlier Wykehamists leading the literary taste of the day in the University. Joseph Spence, exploring the classical mythology and allegory with freshness, and freely reconsidering accepted translations, became Regius Professor of Modern Languages in 1742. He was a cordial man and presently assisted Joseph Warton in his "Virgil." Robert Lowth succeeded Spence as Professor of Poetry, and in that office obtained a reputation for great originality with his lectures on Hebrew poetry.

Collins's chief acquaintance, however, was with his school contemporaries; with Gilbert White who had not yet retired to Selborne; probably with a cousin of Mulso's, Lewis Thomas of Christ Church (later Lieut.-Colonel of the 9th Foot); and with William Blackstone steadily progressing towards his "Commentaries on the Laws of England." All these men wrote verse in the new manner and region attempted by the Wartons and Collins, inspired with the fancy, landscape, and reflection of Milton's minor poems. Blackstone's "Lawyer's Farewell to his Muse," for example, written about 1742, might easily be taken here and there for the work of Collins, especially in his Ode on "The Manners." Thomas wrote an unrhymed Ode.

The chief personal account of Collins at Oxford is by White, writing many years afterwards, and not so comprehendingly as we might have expected. He says that Collins was too proud of his school attainments, and too ready to believe the world was at his feet. At the same time he praises his temperance and his warm-hearted enthusiasm. His anecdote shows Collins as learnedly witty in conversation: one day, at a tea-party in Collins's rooms, the ill-tempered Hampton came in, and kicked the tea-table across the room. "Our poet, though of a warm disposition, was so confounded at the unexpected downfall, and so astonished at the unmerited insult, that he took no notice of the aggressor, but getting up from his chair calmly, he began picking up the slices of his bread and butter, and the fragments of his china, repeating very mildly:

Invenias etiam disiecti membra poetae.

Collins decided to print his "Persian Eclogues," which appeared without his name in January 1742, published in London

by J. Roberts. More than 500 *copies were sold. The author also, concealed as "A Gentleman of Oxford," proceeded to bring out his "Verses humbly Address'd to Sir Thomas Hanmer on his Edition of Shakespeare"—a monument of Oxford printing in that handsome age. This tribute is dated December 3rd* 1743.[1] *Collins may have had the lurking hope that it would bring him a patron; but Hanmer died in* 1746. *The poem illustrates Collins's sense of the panorama of history; it is the story of dramatic genius in Europe. In it is a proposal for a Shakespeare Gallery, which Alderman Boydell acted upon, too late for Collins to rejoice at it; and the allusion to the "disiecti membra poetae,"*

> *Those sibyl-leaves, the sport of every wind,*
> *(For poets ever were a careless kind),*

forebodes the fate of Collins's own manuscripts. Robert Dodsley, watching for good literature, republished the poem with Collins's name in 1744. *The excellent Song in echo of "Cymbeline" was added. These early productions of Collins were reprinted, in miscellanies and editions of Shakespeare, more often than his maturer poems, until a proper appreciation was in the air.*

The crisis of his leaving Oxford, where he took his degree of B.A. in November 1743, *is obscured. He did not become a Fellow of Magdalen, it being necessary that Fellows should be clergymen, or exceptionally lawyers or physicians; and he gave that as his reason for leaving the University abruptly in* 1744. *There was nothing uncommon in his owing money to his bookseller and tailor. The lights of London, too, were no less attractive than*

[1] *Yet the* Imprimatur *to Hanmer's Shakespeare is dated March 26th* 1744.

SALEM COLLEGE LIBRARY Winston-Salem, N. C.

usual ; there he would find literary and social fortune. He was in London before July 8th 1744, having already circulated proposals for a work to be published by subscription. On arriving he visited his cousin, George Payne, through whom Colonel Martin allowed him money, and he made the mistake of going " gaily dressed, and with a feather in his hat." Payne gave him warning, but presently, disturbed by Collins's frequent call for his dole and want of seriousness, ceased to pay him anything. The Goldsmithian gay attire, too, had to be put away when, on July 13th 1744, the poet's mother died, aged 63. She left between him and his sisters a small property near Chichester, and Payne showed some kindness to them all by purchasing the poet's share and keeping it in trust for the sisters. In October Collins was living next to John Mulso in King's Square Court, Soho.

Uncertain what profession to try, Collins was inevitably a poet; " did something, however little." It is one-sided to see him then as merely " that wandering Knight Collins " (his friend Cooper's phrase), although he drifted and played. Those were serious times. By Collins's allusions we may know that the Young Pretender's march on Derby, the reverses of the British at Preston Pans and Falkirk, the unlucky battles in Flanders, the enterprise and victories of William, Duke of Cumberland, seized his attention. Nor were the wars entirely remote. Precautions military and civil were proclaimed through Kent and Sussex to baffle a French invasion. The Bishop of Chichester published his " Speech to the Gentlemen of the County of Sussex, in the Time of the Rebellion, at their General Meeting at Lewes, Oct. 11th 1745." At 21 East Street, Chichester, there must have been frequent allusion to Colonel Martin and his officers in the field of battle.

Nevertheless, Guildford races were held as usual in Whitsun-week, 1746, *and there Joseph Warton met Collins. The Northern Rebellion being now suppressed, both were "in very high spirits," and both had several poems to communicate. The age of Odes was setting in. Joseph had been sedulously preparing his examples, and Collins agreed with him that they should join forces, and publish them immediately. Dodsley, to whose new periodical, "The Museum," both were contributors, would be the man for them. Collins, however, had a reserve price on his manuscript—ten guineas. While the question thus raised was unsettled, Collins received a message from his uncle in Flanders (no strange address for the British soldier), and crossed the Channel, going by way of Holland, with which he was pleased, into Belgium. Colonel Martin intended to make him join the Army, but was not satisfied with the inspection, and thought the Church or a chaplaincy in a regiment would suit him better. When Collins returned, he was under orders to obtain from Mr. Green, rector of Birdham, near Chichester, "a title to a curacy"; he went with that to London for the purpose of presenting himself before Matthias Mawson, Bishop of Chichester. It was a dismal prospect to a parson-hater, and, calling on the way on John Hardham, his fellow-townsman, whose name still stands over a tobacconist's at Ludgate Circus, he was advised not to be japanned. The company of actors and pleasant vagabonds that met at Hardham's shop was not to be given up.*[1]

A. Millar took the risk of paying Collins the copy-money for his

[1] *The date of Collins's visit to Flanders is uncertain, but Mulso's letters to Gilbert White show that it was either in* 1745 *or* 1746. *Or there may have been two visits, but I would rather assume that one of the letters has been misdated in the printing.*

"Odes." Dodsley took J. Warton's manuscript. The two books—thin quartos—appeared in December 1746, Joe Warton's first, with prefatory observations on putting poetry right. This book was soon reprinted. Its subjects and predilections were like those of Collins; there were titles "To Evening" and "To Liberty," and lines like

> *O let each Muse's fame increase,*
> *O bid Britannia rival Greece!*

and

> *O modest Evening! oft let me appear*
> *A wand'ring votary in thy pensive train;*
> *Listening to ev'ry wildly-warbling throat*
> *That fills with farewell sweet thy darkening plain—*

which is an experiment in rhymed and unrhymed lines, a Wartonian compromise. Collins's "Odes on Several Descriptive and Allegoric Subjects," of which 1000 *copies, far too many, were printed, bore on the title-page an emblem, perhaps sketched by Collins—at the top, the heads of Tragedy and Pastoral; beneath, a lyre and Pan-pipes in a wreath of laurel, oakleaf, corn, and berries. The succeeding poems compose a panegyric of ancient glorious nations and modern Britain, with a petition that Collins may be fortunate enough "to be among the British poets," like Keats. The reader is encouraged to a lively hope in English character, imagination, and action. Through the voice of Collins our heroes, poets, novelists, musicians are "with all their Country's wishes blest," and the natural beauties of Britain are seen in his mirror. Why this splendid utterance of a correct patriotism failed to win the reading world is inexplicable. The*

friends of Collins may have liked the book. A copy in the Dyce collection is inscribed "Mrs Mulso." [1]

Unlucky in the reception of these fine poems, Collins was not dejected; he had youth, many friends and many plans. In the Ode to Fear he implies that he had dramatic aspirations. Probably through Hardham, who was Garrick's teller of the pit at Drury Lane, he knew Garrick, and "had the liberty of the scenes and green-room"; which supplied him with witty talk, and seemed to promise a career. He "planned several tragedies, but he only planned them." For some years he had also dreamed of being the historian, or part-historian, of the Revival of Learning. He printed proposals for it, of which Joseph Warton, writing about 1755*—a date which throws light on the persisting* sanity *of Collins —gives us an abstract: "Concerning the particular encouragement given by Leo X to polite literature and the fine arts I forbear to enlarge, because a friend of mine is at present engaged in writing 'The History of the Age of Leo X.' It is a noble period, and full of those most important events which have had the greatest influence on human affairs. Such is the discovery of the West-Indies,*

[1] *By a coincidence, Gray's letter to Wharton on December 27th* 1746, *not only presents the opinion of a contemporary on Collins's "Odes," but enlightens us on John Mulso's allusions to a "Captain Hargrave," a friend of the set, who played the harpsichord to Collins:*

"Poor dear Mr. Delaval indeed has had a little misfortune; intelligence was brought, that he had with him a certain gentlewoman, properly called Nell Burnet (but whose Nom de Guerre was Captain Hargraves) in an officer's habit, whom he had carried all about to see chapels and libraries, and make visits in the face of day," etc. "Have you seen the works of two young authors, a Mr. Warton and Mr. Collins, both writers of Odes? it is odd enough, but each is the half of a considerable man, and one the counterpart of the other. The first has but little invention, very poetical choice of expression, and a good ear. The second, a fine fancy, modelled upon the antique, a bad ear, great variety of words and images, with no choice at all. They both deserve to last some years, but will not."

by the Spaniards; and of a passage to the East by the Portugueze; the invention of printing; the reformation of religion, with many others: all which will be insisted upon at large, and their consequences displayed." *How lamentable it is that we do not possess what the emotion, learning, insight and painting of Collins would have made of these subjects! It has been alleged that he did no more than talk of them, but Thomas Warton assures us that he finished an admirable preliminary dissertation, and the same thing is very certainly stated in the biography of William Roscoe, the eventual historian of Leo X.*

Dr. Johnson, who thought Collins had not written a page of that history, introduces another of his schemes with an anecdote. "*About this time I fell into his company. His appearance was decent and manly; his knowledge considerable, his views extensive, his conversation elegant, and his disposition cheerful. By degrees I gained his confidence; and one day was admitted to him when he was immured by a bailiff, that was prowling in the street. On this occasion recourse was had to the booksellers, who, on the credit of a translation of Aristotle's Poetics, which he engaged to write with a large commentary, advanced as much money as enabled him to escape into the country. He shewed me the guineas safe in his hand.*" *The time must have been* 1747, *and the place possibly that mentioned by White:* "*Collins lodged in a little house with a Miss Bundy, at the corner of King's-square-court, Soho.*" *Collins's friend John Ragsdale (not otherwise remembered) saw many sheets of the translation, and I have met with a generous announcement of the work by Johnson himself in his preface to Dodsley's* "*Preceptor,*" 1748. *Recommending some authorities on rhetoric and poetry, he proceeds,* "*But a more*

accurate and Philosophical Account is expected from a Commentary upon Aristotle's *Art of Poetry, with which the Literature of this Nation will be in a short Time augmented.*" *A bold, distinct passage in the "Preceptor" on the elements which must combine in a poet or a poem is very likely—in view of Johnson's notice—a fragment from Collins's work.*

In 1747 *the stately "Biographia Britannica" began to be published, for which Collins undertook to write some memoirs; but none of those in it are identified as his. If I do not misread Ragsdale's recollections, he was also composing new Odes "to raise a present subsistence"; he spent days in Ragsdale's house in Bond Street writing them, and despite his host's appeals, throwing the drafts on the fire. We see still more of his projects in the recently discovered letter to the poet and miscellanist John Gilbert Cooper, now among the exhibited MSS. at the British Museum.*

London,
Tuesday, Nov. 10 1747.

"*Dear Cooper,*

"*Your obliging Pacquet reach'd me last night, at an hour which I had assigned for the carrying on of my design. I will not lose time in telling you how sensible I was of your kind promise. I hope our Hearts are form'd so much alike, that yours will imagine the force with which such generosity must affect mine without my recourse to those symptoms of vulgar Friendship, verbal acknowledgements. I had wrote to you by Saturday's post, to tell you my thoughts of changing the title which I still think should be: The Friendly Examiner or Letters of Polémon and Philéthus; or the Plain Dealer with the same Appendix. In regard to the Clar.*[1]

[1] "*Clarendon Review,*" *see p.* 21.

I think it nimis fastuosum (*to talk like Le Sage's Salzedo*) *and apprehend it may be dislik'd by a particular Body of zealous Literati at the same time that I conceive the above to be more modest and equally comprehensive. You found by my last that I propos'd the more literary papers should fall under the name of Polémon and the more lusory or comic under that of Philéthus. In order to hint this at the head of the Paper, I shall have a medallion engrav'd of two elegant Heads à l'antique thus* [he draws them] (*Don't you think 'em à l'antique?*) *over the lower part of the necks of which there shall be a veil thrown, from under which a little* Art *shall appear writing on a Roman scroll, & a Satyr either in contrast holding up another, or writing on part of the same, or suppose the veil to be upheld by Friendship, who may at the same time point to the Relievo of the medallion while she discovers the ornaments of the base by supporting the veil. The Motto to the first paper shall be, with your approbation, Duo turba sumus. That to the second part, or the Paper of Philéthus, Idonea dicere vitae or Illustrans commoda vitae, & that which shall appear at the head of the next of Polémon*

Usus vetusto genere, sed rebus novis. Phaedr:

or

Plus operis quanto veniae minus

or, &c., &c., &c., &c. In the course of the Paper may be introduc'd New Characters such as, if it be not too Ancient, Athenaeus, from whom any Poetical fragments of our best writers, such as some MSS. of Fairfax which I can procure, or any anecdotes of their lives, &c., might with the greatest propriety come.

"Thus far a desire of consulting you has carried me into a forgetfulness of the Essay, with which I have been so much charm'd till this half hour, when I began talking to you.

"It is my sincere opinion that the subject could not have been treated in a more Picturesque or forcible Allegory, and I am confident I am at least qualified to give the Public one Beautiful Paper. Allow me, Dear Cooper, to thank you from the sincerest Gratitude before I leave you, for tho' I think it unnecessary, yet I feel it too natural to be resisted.

"Yours most affly. and sincly.

"Wm. Collins."

On May 1st 1747 he had obtained something for "present subsistence" by selling, with his sisters, his father's house at Chichester to Mr. Crowcher. It may have enabled him to see more of his friends. We find him in Tom Davies' bookshop, pointing out the particular beauties of a passage in Ben Jonson to the glory of Queen Elizabeth's reign. We have seen that Johnson sought him out. "Among the gentlemen," says honest Ragsdale, "who loved him for a genius, I may reckon the Doctors Armstrong, Barrowby and Hill, Messrs. Quin, Garrick and Foote, who frequently took his opinion on their pieces before they were seen by the public." Of these men, as Collins knew them, a few details may be required. John Armstrong had published, with Millar, his "Art of Preserving Health," and was physician to the military hospital behind Buckingham House. Barrowby was of St. Bartholomew's. "Sir" John Hill was producing his "General Natural History" and his patent medicines. Garrick opened Drury Lane Theatre in 1747 to the strains of Johnson's Prologue.

Quin was about to retire to Bath before the supremacy of Garrick. Foote opened his little theatre in Haymarket in 1747.

Besides these admirers, Collins had others among the wits at the Bedford Coffee-House (a successor to Button's, where Addison, Steele, and Pope had talked). The Bedford was preferred by adventurous young men, "academical rakes," from Oxford. At Slaughter's too—which had a Parisian style about it—his entry was welcome. But he was attracted still more to the society of James Thomson and the Castle Inn—the real "Castle of Indolence"—at Richmond, where Thomson's friends gathered if they did not go to Thomson's house in Kew Lane. Thomson introduced Collins to the Prince of Wales, and Collins introduced Joseph Warton to Thomson. Those were bright days among the prints, and books, and madeira of the Scotch poet; in order to enjoy more of them, Collins took lodgings at Richmond. The sudden death of Thomson in August 1748 *cut short the pleasure, and, as Thomson's first biographer well says, Collins forsook the place.*

Colonel Martin, whose wounds had brought him home from Flanders, died at Chichester on April 19*th,* 1749. *He received a short tribute in the "Gentleman's Magazine." By his will Collins received over £*2000. *He repaid what had been advanced for his "Aristotle's Poetics," a work now adjourned indefinitely, and further he recollected that Millar had been a loser by his "Odes." He accordingly desired Millar to balance the account, "declaring he himself would make good the deficiency; the bookseller readily acquiesced in the proposal; and gave up to Collins the remainder of the impression, which the generous, resentful Bard, immediately consigned to the flames." So says the "Monthly Review" of* 1765, *correcting*

Collins's biographer Langhorne. But, though Collins destroyed as lumber the unsold "Odes," he was not hopeless of writing new ones. In June 1749 *he issued, through Manby and Cox, that on the death of Thomson, an allusive poem, and happy in its allusions, but with a curious error concerning Richmond Church. And, after passing some time with another Scotch poet, John Home, in Winchester and London, and seeing in manuscript the tragedy of "Douglas"—with Young Norval and the Grampian Hills all waiting for the school reciters of another hundred and fifty years—Collins wrote the grandest of his Odes, on the "Popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland." In it he looked forward to going to Scotland himself. This Ode touches on Fairfax's Tasso, and it has lately been discovered that Collins addressed an Epistle to the editor of that translation, and allowed it to be advertized as in the press—"ready on Saturday." No copy is known.*

Collins now began to apprehend the decline of his mental powers, and to combat it with forced gaiety and indulgence. However, Thomas Warton saw him often in London in 1750, *still making plans—one for a review, to be printed under the conduct and authority of the University and called the "Clarendon Review." The registers of the Clarendon Press do not name it. Collins was encouraged this year by hearing that his "Passions"—for a long time the favourite recitation-piece with actors and audiences—had been set to music, performed and printed for the Commemoration of Benefactors at Oxford in* 1750. *Thomas Warton had the distinction a year later. The letter below was preserved in Seward's "Anecdotes":*

"*Sir,*

"*Mr. Blackstone, of Winchester, some time since informed*

me of the honour you had done me at Oxford last summer; for which I return you my sincere thanks. I have another more perfect copy of the Ode, which, had I known your obliging design, I would have communicated to you.

"*Inform me by a line, if you should think one of my better judgment acceptable to you. In such case I could send you one written on a nobler subject, and which, tho' I have been persuaded to bring it forth in London, I think more calculated for an audience in the University. The subject is the Music of the Grecian Theatre; in which I have, I hope naturally, introduced the various characters with which the chorus was concerned, as Œdipus, Medea, Electra, Orestes, &c., &c.*

"*The composition too is probably more correct, as I have chosen the ancient Tragedies for my models, and only copied the most affecting passages in them.*

"*In the mean time, you would greatly oblige me by sending the score of the last. If you can get it written, I will readily answer the expence. If you send it with a copy or two of the Ode (as printed at Oxford) to Mr. Clarke at Winchester, he will forward it to me here.*

"*I am, Sir,*

"*With great respect,*

"*Your obliged humble servant,*

"*William Collins.*"

"*Chichester, Sussex, November* 8, 1750.

"*To Dr. WILLIAM HAYES, Professor of Music, OXFORD.*"

"*P.S. Mr. Clarke passed some days here while Mr. Worgan was with me; from whose friendship, I hope, he will receive some advantage.*"

Contemporary taste found Hayes's setting every way appropriate, and the choruses "very full and majestic." The Mr. Worgan who stayed with Collins was an organist and composer of some importance in his day.

In November 1750 *Collins saw the departure of his sister Elizabeth as the bride of Lieut. Nathaniel Tanner, one of Colonel Martin's subalterns. Soon afterwards he fell ill, and when Thomas Warton came to London at Easter, in* 1751, *he was desired to come and take his last leave of Collins. That fear proved false, and Collins was able in June* 1751 *to send Warton a letter on some private matter, "written in fine hand, and without the least symptom of a disordered or debilitated understanding." Was the private matter a question about the parody of Collins which appeared this year in "The Student," signed Chimaericus Oxoniensis, and attributed to Warton? That parody, reprinted in the many editions of Warton's "Oxford Sausage" after the death of Collins, has a long and contemptuous title—"Ode to Horror, in the Allegoric, Descriptive, Alliterative, Epithetical, Fantastic, Hyperbolical and Diabolical Style of our Modern Ode-Wrights, and Monody-Mongers." The victim is Joseph Warton as much as Collins, but the latter is taken off in the footnotes and in passages such as these:*

O bid my well-rang'd Numbers rise,
Pervious to none but Attic *eyes;*
O give the Strain that Madness loves
Till every starting Sense approves,

and

Till I, thy pensive Votary,
Horror, look madly wild like thee;

Until I gain true Transport's Shore,
And Life's retiring Scene is o'er,
Aspire to some more azure Sky,
Remote from dim Mortality. . . .

The jest on madness, as that in Gifford's review of Charles Lamb, was unfortunate indeed. It may be said here that Thomas Warton in 1753 *included the Ode to Evening and that to Thomson's memory in the "Union," a little collection published at Edinburgh (and republished in London the year that Collins died).*

Shadowed with misery in his contracting powers of spirit, Collins decided to travel for variety; he again crossed the Channel, but in France found himself growing worse, and returned home. Then like Pope he looked for the sun at Bath, where his friend Quin was living; but the desired improvement delayed. Johnson visited him at Islington, awaiting his sister. "There was then nothing of disorder discernible in his mind by any but himself; but he had withdrawn from study, and travelled with no other book than an English Testament, such as children carry to the school: when his friend took it into his hand, out of curiosity to see what companion a Man of Letters had chosen, 'I have but one book,' said Collins, 'but that is the best.'" A fit of insanity appears to have caused Collins soon after to enter the asylum of Dr. McDonald at Chelsea, whence Ann his sister took him to Chichester.

"But how little can we venture to exult in any intellectual powers or literary attainments when we consider the condition of poor Collins!" It is Johnson addressing J. Warton on March 8th 1754*: "I knew him a few years ago, full of hopes and full of projects, versed in many languages, high in fancy, and*

strong in retention. This busy and forcible mind is now under the government of those"—probably Ann Collins—"who lately would not have been able to comprehend the least and most narrow of its designs. What do you hear of him? are there hopes of his recovery? or is he to pass the remainder of his life in misery and degradation, perhaps with complete consciousness of his calamity?" The anxiety of Johnson must have stirred the Wartons to closer communication with Collins, who in the summer of 1754 *stayed a month in Oxford. Thomas Warton "saw him frequently; but he was so weak and low, that he could not bear conversation," the more so as Warton spoke with an impediment. The physical condition was all that Warton noticed; Collins could not walk from his lodgings opposite Christ Church to Warton's book-littered rooms in Trinity College without the support of his servant.*

Moved by this, the "two learned brothers" went to Chichester that September, and found Collins living with his sister in a house entered from the cloisters, and secluded from even the modest excitements of the city. Ann was now Mrs. Sempill; her husband being identified as the third son of the tenth Lord Sempill, of the county of Renfrew—an officer in the Army. Elizabeth Collins, having married Nathaniel Tanner of the King's Own, had gone into Scotland, where she died in 1754. *The Wartons, then, found Collins in Mrs. Sempill's care, and "in high spirits at intervals," as he produced his manuscripts and rare books; but though "what he said wanted neither judgment nor spirit, a few minutes exhausted him, and he was forced to rest upon the couch." It has been often repeated that Collins was indolent. There is little enough of his work extant, but from the notices of his library*

which Thomas Warton chances to give in his "History of English Poetry," it appears that he was the opposite of indolent. As these notices also inspire a quiet interior of the three friends talking together and still expecting the future to be bright, they shall be produced here.

1. *John Skelton: "The Nigramansir, a morall Enterlude," printed by Wynkyn de Worde in a thin quarto, and closely described by Warton though otherwise unknown. "My lamented friend Mr. William Collins, whose Odes will be remembered while any taste for true poetry remains, shewed me this piece at Chichester, not many months before his death: and he pointed it out to me as a very rare and valuable curiosity. He intended to write the History of the Restoration of Learning under Leo the Tenth, and with a view to that design, had collected many scarce books. Some few of these fell into my hands at his death. The rest, among which, I suppose, was this Interlude, were dispersed."*

2. *"In the dispersed library of the late Mr. William Collins, I saw a thin folio of two sheets in black letter, containing a poem in the octave stanza, entitled Fabyl's Ghoste, printed by John Rastell in the year* 1533." *Fabell was the Merry Devil of Edmonton.*

3. *"Among the books of my friend the late Mr. William Collins of Chichester, now dispersed, was a Collection of short comic stories in prose, printed in the black letter under the year* 1570, *'sett forth by maister Richard Edwardes mayster of her maiesties reuels.'"*

4. *"Aurelio and Isabella,"* 1586. *"I was informed by the late Mr. Collins of Chichester, that Shakespeare's Tempest, for which no origin is yet assigned, was formed on this favourite*

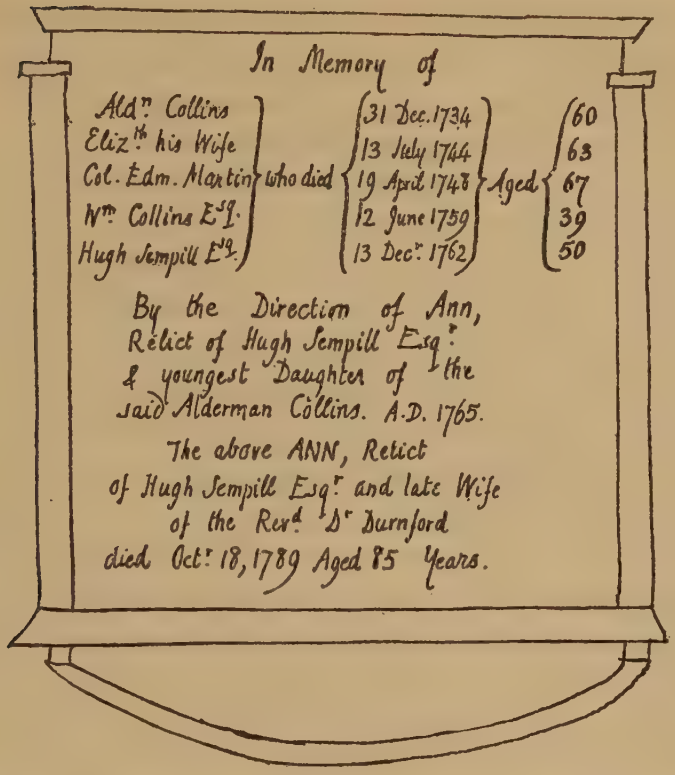
romance. But although this information has not proved true on examination, an useful conclusion may be drawn from it, that Shakespeare's story is somewhere to be found in an Italian novel, at least that the story preceded Shakespeare. Mr. Collins had searched this subject with no less fidelity, than judgment and industry; but his memory failing in his last calamitous indisposition, he probably gave me the name of one novel for another. I remember he added a circumstance, which may lead to a discovery, that the principal character of the romance, answering to Shakespeare's Prospero, was a chemical necromancer, who had bound a spirit like Ariel to obey his call and perform his services."

Collins let Joseph Warton have specimens of his unpublished poems, but, as if the bad genius that dogged Collins's writings went with them, Warton's papers have gone astray; "traces of high imagery" could not save Collins's fragments, except one, which Warton inserted in his "Essay on Pope," 1756. *The second day of the Wartons' visit, Collins was too much exhausted to receive his friends. One other visitor of this time, William Smith, Treasurer of the Ordnance, and formerly in the same Chamber at Winchester with Collins, aroused the poet, whose first remark was, "Smith, do you remember my Dream?" Smith remembered it well. His schoolfellow had been seen one morning "particularly depressed and melancholy. Being pressed to disclose the cause, he at last said it was in consequence of a dream: for this he was laughed at, but desired to tell what it was; he said, he dreamed that he was walking in the fields where there was a lofty tree; that he climbed it, and when he had nearly reached the top, a great branch, upon which he had got, failed with him, and let him fall to the ground. This account caused more ridicule;*

and he was asked how he could possibly be affected by this common consequence of a school-boy adventure, when he did not pretend, even in imagination and sleep, to have received any hurt; he replied, that the Tree was the Tree of Poetry." If this premonition seems trivial, let the reader consider the reappearance of the Tree in the splendid glooms of the Ode on the Poetical Character, and let him, with William Smith, gaze upon Collins, disastered and bowed down, in his solitude at Chichester.

The person who most visibly influenced his later years, his sister Ann, was a strange woman. "She loved money to excess, and evinced so outrageous an aversion to her brother, because he squandered or gave away to the boys in the cloisters whatever money he had, that she destroyed, in a paroxysm of resentment, all his papers, and whatever remained of his enthusiasm for poetry, as far as she could." When Hayley the gentlemanly poet called on her, at least she was able to give him a little drawing by Collins; whose last miseries are more easily comprehensible, if her fell swoop occurred while he was alive. At the age of over sixty, her first husband having died abroad, Ann married a clergyman, Dr. Durnford, but separated herself from him and returned to Chichester, where, in spite of her considerable property (augmented in all likelihood by what Collins left), she could not pay her tradesmen, but gave promissory notes and ran up debts.

Some sign of her closeness, coldness, egotism may be conjectured in the wall-tablet to the Collins family in St. Andrew's Church. Here we might have reasonably thought to find a sister remembering of her brother that went to Oxford, if not his poetical honours, at least his B.A., and the military prowess of her uncle who left her so comfortable a fortune, and the other sister who died among



strangers. Instead, the only tribute is to Ann for having the stone cut—at the lowest cost, for it is a mean-looking performance.[1]

Ann may have been a barrier between Collins and his neighbours, for we hear nothing of him from contemporaries in Chichester with tastes and talents congenial with his. There was William Clarke, Canon, who, besides being such a lover of British poets as to have his house decorated with their portraits, was long and eagerly engaged in enriching the Cathedral Library. "I ask

[1] *There is doubt about the dates on this tablet. Colonel Martin's death is elsewhere assigned to the year* 1749, *and Captain Sempill's to* 1764.

everybody that I decently can," *he writes to Bowyer the printer in* 1755. *Then there were the three Smiths of Chichester, landscape painters of wide repute, and one of them a pastoral poet. We do not know that such men were admitted to the domestic prison of Collins. Of his walks abroad a glimpse is given by Charles Crocker, the poetic sexton, in a poem on* " *The Lavant.*" *Crocker embroiders the tradition that Collins in his darker days would wander alone beside that small stream which embraces the city.*

When Joseph Warton visited him for the last time, Collins gave him " *with his own hands* " *a copy of the* " *Persian Eclogues,*" *a reminder of old friendship rather than of poetical ambition ; for Collins now called the book his Irish Eclogues. He has been rebuked for this playfulness, but he meant that, for any painting of real manners and scenery in them, the Eclogues were as appropriate to Ireland as to Persia. His feelings on the subject lead me to wonder if he wrote the nonsense-verses—the work of a subtle poet—collected in J. Warton's* " *Oxford Sausage,*" *and called* " *Exaltation, a Descriptive Pastoral, in the Modern Style.*" *It opens :*

Beneath the shadows of a glimmering Oak,
Where conscious Meads in soft Delusion broke,
And ancient Murmurs, tremblingly awake,
Repel the neighbouring Coolness of the Brake,
Two Swains, reclining, sooth'd th'enamoured Tongue,
And thus with fragrant Vows, their Pipes they strung.

Corydon declares:

My Love is like the rural Seats above;
The Canopy of Fate is like my Love;
My Love is like the Deep, in Purple drest,
And all Ambrosia warbles in her Breast.

Strephon retaliates:

> *Now tell me, Corydon, and Chloe take,*
> *What Thing is that, by Kings expell'd the Lake,*
> *Whose airy Footsteps faded as they grew,*
> *Produc'd in Silence, yet alive in blue?*

A few minor corrections appear in the copy of the "Persian Eclogues" handed to Warton and again in a new edition of the book as "Oriental Eclogues," published by J. Payne in 1757 *without the author's name. The "Monthly Review," which through these later years drew attention to the genius of Collins, welcomed it. The reviewer, mentioning the slight disguise of authorship in the preface, added, "We are much mistaken, if, in this little performance, we do not discover the elegance, and the picturesque genius of the too much neglected Author of* Odes on several Subjects, descriptive and allegorical." *That is the voice of Goldsmith, who in his "Present State of Polite Learning," published in April* 1759, *makes Collins an illustration of his contention that the public should treat men of letters more nobly: "The neglected author of the Persian Eclogues, which, however inaccurate, excel any in our language, is still alive. Happy, if* insensible *of our neglect, not* raging *at our ingratitude." Another of Goldsmith's allusions to Collins is in place here; speaking of Milton's unrhymed Ode from Horace, he says, "There is an ode extant without rhyme addressed to Evening, by the late Mr. Collins, much more beautiful."*

By such hints we may know that Collins was never quite forgotten in London. Johnson, to whom he was usually "poor dear Collins," had had a report of him from J. Warton in December 1754, *and responded, ". . . I am much concerned. I have a*

notion that by very great temperance, or more properly abstinence, he may yet recover"; again, "Let me know whether you think it would give him pleasure if I should write to him. I have often been near *his state, and therefore have it in great commiseration." Then no reference comes until April 15th 1756, when Johnson enquires, "What becomes of poor dear Collins? I wrote him a letter which he never answered. I suppose writing is very troublesome to him. That man is no common loss."*

Collins became very ill. Mr. Shenton, Vicar of St. Andrew's, was walking in his garden one spring evening in 1759, when he heard a woman, the servant as he thought, reading the Bible to the poet in his room. "Mr. Collins," he told Thomas Warton, "had been accustomed to rave much, and make great moanings; but while she was reading, or rather attempting to read, he was not only silent but attentive likewise, correcting her mistakes, which indeed were very frequent, through the whole of the twenty-seventh chapter of Genesis." On June 12th 1759 Collins died in the arms of his sister Ann; and on June 15th he was buried by Mr. Shenton in the little church of St. Andrew. Thus the human journey of this great poet ended in the quiet nook whence he had set out with brilliance of ideas and endlessness of intention. A century later, during repairs, the family grave was laid open and the skull of Collins disturbed; it was reverently replaced; and now the fragile fabric of the church, among the effaced memorials, threatens to fall in on him and bury him deeper.

But soon after his death and interment, his fame brightened. His poems had been borne on in Dodsley's collection since 1748, and were collected in the "Poetical Calendar" of 1763 by the versemen Fawkes and Woty, with Johnson's celebrated study of his

character. " *Mr. Collins was a man of extensive literature, and of vigorous faculties. He was acquainted not only with the learned tongues, but with the Italian, French, and Spanish languages. He had employed his mind chiefly upon works of fiction; and by indulging some peculiar habits of thought, was eminently delighted with those flights of imagination which pass the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a passive acquiescence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of inchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the water-falls of Elysian gardens.*" *Thus the author of* " *Theodore the Hermit* " *and* " *Rasselas* "; *who also, as though to combat false appearances or malice, is particular to state,* " *His morals were pure, and his opinions pious. . . . That this man, wise and virtuous as he was, passed always unentangled through the snares of life, it would be prejudice and temerity to affirm; but it may be said that at least he preserved the source of action unpolluted, that his principles were never shaken, that his distinctions of right and wrong were never confounded, and that his faults had nothing of malignity or design, but proceeded from some unexpected pressure, or casual temptation.*"

Scarcely anyone dies for love nowadays, but Collins may have had what our rude forefathers describe as a broken heart. The poem, that beautiful occasional-piece, on the piece of bride-cake given to him by a lady, tells us how deeply and secretly he was in love; in Seward's Anecdotes we read: " *Collins was extremely attached to a young Lady who was born the day before him, and who did not return his passion with equal ardour. He*

said, on that occasion, 'that he came into the world a day after the fair.'"

A few more characteristics of Collins: he was passionately fond of music, says White. On particular occasions he wrote verses to amuse his friends, and his humorous talk was well liked. Hi Regan reckons him in the calendar of enthusiastic anglers. He was of middle height, and in his earlier days, according to White, feared he might go blind; others remembered the keenness of his glance. He thought so long and intensely that his brow was fixed in a perpetual frown. Originally temperate to a degree, he turned to the bottle as nepenthe against the menace of madness. "His disorder was not alienation of mind, but general laxity and feebleness, a deficiency rather of his vital than intellectual powers."

Thanks to Dodsley's Miscellany, the "Monthly Review," and the "Poetical Calendar," the time soon came for a memoir and edition of Collins. John Langhorne, translator of Plutarch, undertook these, but spoiled his chances. His "Collins," 1765, is meagre both in biography and text, though graced with genuine if garrulous eulogies. Langhorne did not use the resources then in his reach, but at least he made a convenient book. In 1768 Pearch's Miscellany included many of Collins's poems, and one which we have not received from any other source. In 1781 Johnson's "Lives," and that of Collins among them, were completed. In 1783 a "much-respected and ingenious" man named William Hymers, of Queen's College, Oxford, was preparing a complete edition and full memoir of Collins, for which he procured some reminiscences from Thomas Warton and John Ragsdale, when he died. An imperfect manuscript of Collins's Ode addressed to John Home was found and published by Dr. Alexander Carlyle in

the "Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh," 1788; and the same year an unknown editor inscribed to the Wartons a London edition apparently from a complete copy, thus storing up fuel for the fiery invective of Swinburne against him. In 1789 the Rev. Mr. Walker of Chichester appealed for a memorial to Collins, which Flaxman was commissioned to make; William Hayley, joining in the plan, received from Flaxman two designs, one (more ambitious) for a representation of "The Passions," the other as it is reproduced in this book. "I have attended to your own words," wrote Flaxman, "'that the Poet was found reading the Bible in his last illness,' which situation I like much better than the action of pointing. . . . I think I have succeeded, it has pleased all who have seen it in Rome." Collins's classic sympathies would approve the monument, now one of the favourite details in Chichester Cathedral, but not the vapid and erroneous verses below it, although it took two men—Hayley and John Sargent, author of "The Mine"—to produce them.

We now come to a gleaming vision, which fades away. In his early life Coleridge, as Lamb testifies and his poems show, was deep in the verse of Collins. In the "Biographia Literaria" he says that in 1791 he assisted a friend to write an essay for a literary society in Devonshire, and "assigned sundry reasons, chiefly drawn from a comparison of passages in the Latin poets with the original Greek, from which they were borrowed, for the preference of Collins's odes to those of Gray." The memorandum-book preserved at the British Museum tells us that Coleridge in 1795 meditated an edition of Gray and Collins. It was not to happen; but wherever we look with a good memory in the poetry and essays of the Romantic period, in Wordsworth, Southey,

Lamb, Hazlitt, Hunt, Keats, Scott, Campbell, we may see the freshening undercurrent of those varied, imaginative ideas comprised in Collins's few surviving poems. His spirit had achieved a certain, though subdued triumph, and while we value it highest in the great poets named, it is especially delightful in the numerous minor lovers of solitude, sensibility, and honour who preluded the dynasts of the new poetry. A long list of Collins's disciples between 1765 *and* 1850 *might be made to illustrate that spell. From John Bampfylde to John Keble, every sensitive versifier desired to add his unrhymed Ode, to sing of "hamlets brown" and "Spring with dewy fingers cold." Collins was like a bell calling them into a region unvisited by the shocks of event and the injuries of society.*

But this is digression. Among the many editions of Collins in the early nineteenth century, that of Alexander Dyce was bound to be distinguished; and it was almost contemporary with a pretty, rural edition, printed for E. Collings at Bath in 1828, *under the care of William Crowe, the old poet of "Lewesdon Hill." Crowe was educated under Burton and Joseph Warton at Winchester. The zeal of research was subsequently shown in editions by W. Moy Thomas in* 1858, *by Professor Bronson in America, and by Mr. Christopher Stone here. Yet the case of editing, discussing, or dreaming over Collins, is lit with a troubled glory. We have not the means of knowing what he did. What we have is his young work—after his twenty-fifth year he becomes a lost poet, with only a few exceptions. He lived thirteen years more, and his insanity cannot have been more than occasional until the close. Poets so radiant and intellectually abundant do not suddenly find themselves with nothing to say. Perhaps his special mark is*

the intellectual command of his poetry, which never coldly shuts out the motion of his human simplicity. His topics include those for which it is insufficient to be autobiographical and immediate; for which great knowledge in perfect control, profound self-conquest is required. If Liberty is the subject, Collins is prepared with a rich history, in animated figures and dispositions, of Liberty through the ages. If the Poetic Character makes him vocal he instantly perceives the archetypal poetry of earth,

Yon tented sky, this laughing earth,

and the forces which beget and foster a work of imagination, with critical insight and with glowing and harmonious allegory. It is not uncommon for English natures to be gracious or intimate in verse, but here is a poet whose vision extends delightedly over difficult distances, and who hears beyond the voices of the hour the "Music of the Grecian Theatre." In short he is creative, and for his purposes he dares employ the most remote and massive forms of civilization, or of myth. His longest and most carefully constructed Odes—of which he mentions "more perfect" copies—are of ample range, lofty aspiration, and bright and delicate ornament; while raising his cathedral or pleasure-house in dignity and sovereignty, he is skilful to supply each niche and window, each screen and mosaic. And his building is lyrical still.

Collins is charged with obscurities. I grant them; he sometimes hurries on as though the next shape or colour would vanish too soon for him to win it. The abrupt transition, or unfinished or inexact syntax, may puzzle the reader for a moment. But these faults are the marks of a sincere inspiration, and a devoted energy; they are obscurities with a heart of fire, enigmas arising from

wealth of meaning. In harmony of verse through many modulations, in melody of single passages, in counterchange of impulse and reflection, in personification of the abstract, and again in apparelling solidity with the light of heaven, in the opening of loopholes which dominate glittering expanses of legend, history, literature, art, and emotion, he has instructed a great series of British poets and fascinated still more general readers with even his youthful work,

Quod non tempus edax . . .

He has given us the most consoling and unstrained elegy for our dead in Flanders, and that in only twelve verses, which, nevertheless, have the power of singing on and filling the mind with their incantation. He has seen our English evening as Claude saw the Enchanted Castle, and in his art has caught the mystery in the circumstances of every day, making us freshly conceive the truth of the fairy fancy. But it is nothing to the purpose for such comments to be made in his favour by one who, with deference, refuses to be the critical referee of a poet loved for many years, and under conditions which have tested poetic preferences with searching and tyrannous insistency.

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

PERSIAN ECLOGUES
WRITTEN ORIGINALLY FOR THE ENTERTAINMENT OF THE LADIES OF TAURIS
1742

THE PREFACE

It is with the Writings of Mankind, in some Measure, as with their Complexions or their Dress, each Nation hath a Peculiarity in all these, to distinguish it from the rest of the World.

The Gravity of the Spaniard, and the Levity of the Frenchman, are as evident in all their Productions as in their Persons themselves; and the Stile of my Countrymen is as naturally Strong and Nervous as that of an Arabian or Persian is rich and figurative.

There is an Elegancy and Wildness of Thought which recommends all their Compositions; and our Genius's are as much too cold for the Entertainment of such Sentiments, as our Climate is for their Fruits and Spices. If any of these Beauties are to be found in the following Eclogues, I hope my Reader will consider them as an Argument of their being Original. I received them at the Hands of a Merchant, who had made it his Business to enrich himself with the Learning, as well as the Silks and Carpets of the Persians. The little Information I could gather concerning their Author, was, That his Name was Abdallah, and that he was a Native of Tauris.

It was in that City that he died of a Distemper fatal in those Parts, whilst he was engag'd in celebrating the Victories of his favourite Monarch, the Great Abbas. As to the Eclogues themselves, they give a very just View of the Miseries, and Inconveniences, as well as the Felicities that attend one of the finest Countries in the East.

The Time of the Writing them was probably in the Beginning of Sha Sultan Hosseyn's Reign, the Successor of Sefi or Solyman the Second.

Whatever Defects, as, I doubt not, there will be many, fall under the Reader's Observation, I hope his Candour will incline him to make the following Reflection:

That the Works of Orientals contain many Peculiarities, and that thro' Defect of Language few European Translators can do them Justice.

ECLOGUE the First.

SELIM; *or, the Shepherd's Moral.*

SCENE, *a valley near* Bagdat.

TIME, *the* MORNING.

YE Persian Maids, attend your Poet's Lays,
And hear how Shepherds pass their golden Days:
Not all are blest, whom Fortune's Hand sustains
With Wealth in Courts, nor all that haunt the Plains:
Well may your Hearts believe the Truths I tell,
'Tis Virtue makes the Bliss where'er we dwell.

Thus Selim sung; by sacred Truth inspir'd;
Nor Praise, but such as Truth bestow'd, desir'd:
Wise in himself, his meaning Songs convey'd
Informing Morals to the Shepherd Maid,
Or taught the Swains that surest Bliss to find,
What Groves nor Streams bestow, a virtuous Mind.

When sweet and blushing, like a virgin Bride,
The radiant Morn resum'd her orient Pride,
When wanton Gales along the Valleys play,

Breathe on each Flow'r, and bear their Sweets away:
By Tigris' Wand'ring Waves he sate, and sung
This useful Lesson for the Fair and Young.

Ye Persian Dames, he said, to you belong,
Well may they please, the Morals of my Song;
No fairer Maids, I trust, than you are found,
Grac'd with soft Arts, the peopled World around!
The Morn that lights you, to your Loves supplies
Each gentler Ray delicious to your Eyes:
For you those Flow'rs her fragrant Hands bestow,
And yours the Love that Kings delight to know.
Yet think not these, all beauteous as they are,
The best kind Blessings Heav'n can grant the Fair!
Who trust alone in Beauty's feeble Ray,
Boast but the Worth, Balsora's Pearls display;
Drawn from the Deep, we own their Surface bright,
But, dark within, they drink no lust'rous Light:
Such are the Maids, and such the Charms they boast,
By Sense unaided, or to Virtue lost.
Self-flattering Sex! your Hearts believe in vain
That Love shall blind, when once he fires the Swain;
Or hope a Lover by your Faults to win,
As Spots on Ermin beautify the Skin:
Who seeks secure to rule, be first her Care
Each softer Virtue that adorns the Fair,

Each tender Passion Man delights to find,
The lov'd Perfection of a female Mind.

Blest were the Days, when Wisdom held her Reign,
And Shepherds sought her on the silent Plain;
With Truth she wedded in the secret Grove,
Immortal Truth, and Daughters bless'd their Love.

O haste, fair Maids, ye Virtues come away,
Sweet Peace and Plenty lead you on your way!
The balmy Shrub for you shall love our Shore,
By Ind' excell'd or Araby no more.

Lost to our Fields, for so the Fates ordain,
The dear Deserters shall return again.
Come thou whose Thoughts as limpid Springs are clear,
To lead the Train, sweet Modesty, appear.
Here make thy Court amidst our rural Scene,
And Shepherd-Girls shall own Thee for their Queen.
With Thee be Chastity, of all afraid,
Distrusting all, a wise suspicious Maid;
But Man the most; not more the Mountain Doe
Holds the swift Falcon for her deadly Foe.
Cold is her Breast, like Flow'rs that drink the Dew,
A silken Veil conceals her from the View.
No wild Desires amidst thy Train be known,

But Faith, whose Heart is fix'd on one alone:
Desponding Meekness with her down-cast Eyes,
And friendly Pity full of tender Sighs;
And Love the last: By these your Hearts approve,
These are the Virtues that must lead to Love.

Thus sung the Swain, and ancient Legends say,
The maids of Bagdat verify'd the Lay:
Dear to the Plains, the Virtues came along,
The Shepherds lov'd, and Selim bless'd his Song.

The End of the FIRST ECLOGUE.

ECLOGUE the SECOND.

HASSAN; *or, the Camel driver.*

SCENE, *the desart.*

TIME, MID-DAY.

IN silent Horror o'er the boundless Waste
The Driver Hassan with his Camels past.
One Cruise of Water on his Back he bore,
And his light Scrip contain'd a scanty Store:
A Fan of painted Feathers in his Hand,
To guard his shaded Face from scorching Sand.
The sultry Sun had gain'd the middle Sky,
And not a Tree, and not an Herb was nigh.
The Beasts, with Pain, their dusty Way pursue,
Shrill roar'd the Winds, and dreary was the View!
With desp'rate Sorrow wild th' affrighted Man
Thrice sigh'd, thrice strook his Breast, and thus began:
Sad was the Hour, and luckless was the Day,
When first from Schiraz' *Walls I bent my Way.*

Ah! little thought I of the blasting Wind,
The Thirst or pinching Hunger that I find!
Bethink thee, Hassan, where shall Thirst assuage,

When fails this Cruise, his unrelenting Rage?
Soon shall this Scrip its precious Load resign,
Then what but Tears and Hunger shall be thine?

Ye mute Companions of my Toils, that bear
In all my Griefs a more than equal Share!
Here, where no Springs, in Murmurs break away,
Or Moss-crown'd Fountains mitigate the Day:
In vain ye hope the green Delights to know,
Which Plains more blest, or verdant Vales bestow.
Here Rocks alone, and tasteless Sands are found,
And faint and sickly Winds for ever howl around.
Sad was the Hour, and luckless was the Day,
When first from Schiraz' *Walls I bent my Way.*

Curst be the Gold and Silver which persuade
Weak Men to follow far-fatiguing Trade.
The Lilly-Peace outshines the silver Store,
And Life is dearer than the golden Ore.
Yet Money tempts us o'er the Desart brown,
To ev'ry distant Mart, and wealthy Town:
Full oft we tempt the Land, and oft the Sea,
And are we only yet repay'd by Thee?
Ah! why this Ruin so attractive made,
Or why fond Man so easily betray'd?
Why heed we not, while mad we haste along,

The gentle Voice of Peace, or Pleasure's Song?
Or wherefore think the flow'ry Mountain's Side,
The Fountain's Murmurs, and the Valley's Pride,
Why think we these less pleasing to behold,
Than dreary Desarts, if they lead to Gold?
Sad was the Hour, and luckless was the Day,
When first from Schiraz' *Walls I bent my Way.*

O cease, my Fears! all frantic as I go,
When Thought creates unnumber'd Scenes of Woe,
What if the Lion in his Rage I meet!
Oft in the Dust I view his printed Feet:
And fearful! oft, when Day's declining Light
Yields her pale Empire to the Mourner Night,
By Hunger rous'd, he scours the groaning Plain,
Gaunt Wolves and sullen Tygers in his Train:
Before them Death with Shrieks directs their Way,
Fills the wild Yell, and leads them to their Prey.
Sad was the Hour, and luckless was the Day,
When first from Schiraz' *Walls I bent my Way.*

At that dead Hour the silent Asp shall creep,
If ought of rest I find, upon my Sleep:
Or some swoln Serpent twist his Scales around,
And wake to Anguish with a burning Wound.
Thrice happy they, the wise contented Poor,
From Lust of Wealth, and Dread of Death secure;

They tempt no Desarts, and no Griefs they find;
Peace rules the Day, where Reason rules the Mind.
Sad was the Hour, and luckless was the Day,
When first from Schiraz' *Walls I bent my Way.*

O hapless Youth! for she thy Love hath won,
The tender Zara, will be most undone!
Big swell'd my Heart, and own'd the pow'rful Maid,
When fast she dropt her Tears, and thus she said:
"Farewel the Youth whom Sighs could not detain,
"Whom Zara's breaking Heart implor'd in vain;
"Yet as thou go'st, may ev'ry Blast arise,
"Weak and unfelt as these rejected Sighs!
"Safe o'er the Wild, no Perils mayst thou see,
"No Griefs endure, nor weep, false Youth, like me."
O let me safely to the Fair return,
Say with a Kiss, she must not, shall not mourn.
O! let me teach my Heart to lose its Fears,
Recall'd by Wisdom's Voice, and Zara's Tears.

He said, and call'd on Heav'n to bless the Day,
When back to Schiraz' Walls he bent his Way.

The End of the SECOND ECLOGUE.

ECLOGUE the THIRD.

ABRA; *or, the* Georgian *Sultana.*

SCENE, *a forest.*

TIME, *the* EVENING.

IN Georgia's Land, where Tefflis' Tow'rs are seen,
In distant View along the level Green,
While Ev'ning Dews enrich the glitt'ring Glade,
And the tall Forests cast a longer Shade,
What time 'tis sweet o'er Fields of Rice to stray,
Or scent the breathing Maize at Close of Day;
Amidst the Maids of Zagen's peaceful Grove,
Emyra sung the pleasing Cares of Love.

Of Abra first began the tender Strain,
Who led her Youth, with Flocks upon the Plain:
At Morn she came those willing Flocks to lead,
Where Lillies rear them in the wat'ry Mead;
From early Dawn the live-long Hours she told,
'Till late at silent Eve she penn'd the Fold.
Deep in the Grove beneath the secret Shade,
A various Wreath of od'rous Flow'rs she made:

Gay-motley'd Pinks and sweet Jonquils she chose,
The Violet-blue, that on the Moss-bank grows;
All-sweet to Sense, the flaunting Rose was there;
The finish'd Chaplet well-adorn'd her Hair.

Great Abbas chanc'd that fated Morn to stray,
By Love conducted from the Chace away;
Among the vocal Vales he heard her Song,
And sought the Vales and echoing Groves among:
At length he found, and woo'd the rural Maid,
She knew the Monarch, and with Fear obey'd.
Be ev'ry Youth like Royal Abbas *mov'd,*
And ev'ry Georgian *Maid like* Abra *lov'd.*

The Royal Lover bore her from the Plain,
Yet still her Crook and bleating Flock remain:
Oft as she went, she backward turn'd her View,
And bad that Crook, and bleating Flock Adieu.
Fair happy Maid! to other Scenes remove,
To richer Scenes of golden Pow'r and Love!
Go leave the simple Pipe, and Shepherd's Strain,
With Love delight thee, and with Abbas reign.
Be ev'ry Youth like Royal Abbas *mov'd,*
And ev'ry Georgian *Maid like* Abra *lov'd.*

Yet midst the Blaze of Courts she fix'd her Love,
On the cool Fountain, or the shady Grove;

Still with the Shepherd's Innocence her Mind
To the sweet Vale, and flow'ry Mead inclin'd,
And oft as Spring renew'd the Plains with Flow'rs,
Breath'd his soft Gales, and led the fragrant Hours,
With sure Return she sought the sylvan Scene,
The breezy Mountains, and the Forests green.
Her Maids around her mov'd, a duteous Band!
Each bore a Crook all-rural in her Hand:
Some simple Lay, of Flocks and Herds they sung,
With Joy the Mountain, and the Forest rung.
Be ev'ry Youth like Royal Abbas *mov'd,*
And ev'ry Georgian *Maid like* Abra *lov'd.*

And oft the Royal Lover left the Care,
And Thorns of State, attendant on the Fair:
Oft to the Shades and low-roof'd Cots retir'd,
Or sought the Vale where first his Heart was fir'd;
A Russet Mantle, like a Swain, he wore,
And thought of Crowns and busy Courts no more.
Be ev'ry Youth like Royal Abbas *mov'd,*
And ev'ry Georgian *Maid like* Abra *lov'd.*

Blest was the Life, that Royal Abbas led:
Sweet was his Love, and innocent his Bed.
What if in Wealth the noble Maid excel;
The simple Shepherd Girl can love as well.

Let those who rule on Persia's jewell'd Throne,
Be fam'd for Love, and gentlest Love alone:
Or wreath, like Abbas, full of fair Renown,
The Lover's Myrtle, with the Warrior's Crown.

Oh happy Days! the Maids around her say,
Oh haste, profuse of Blessings, haste away!
Be ev'ry Youth, like Royal Abbas, *moved*;
And ev'ry Georgian *Maid, like* Abra, *lov'd.*

The End of the THIRD ECLOGUE.

ECLOGUE the FOURTH.

AGIB *and* SECANDER; *or, the Fugitives.*

SCENE, *a Mountain in* Circassia.

TIME, MIDNIGHT.

In fair Circassia, where to Love inclin'd,
Each Swain was blest, for ev'ry Maid was kind!
At that still Hour, when awful Midnight reigns,
And none, but Wretches, haunt the twilight Plains;
What Time the Moon had hung her Lamp on high,
And past in Radiance, thro' the cloudless Sky:
Sad o'er the Dews, two Brother Shepherds fled,
Where wild'ring Fear and desp'rate Sorrow led.
Fast as they prest their Flight, behind them lay
Wide ravag'd Plains, and Valleys stole away.
Along the Mountain's bending Sides they ran,
'Till faint and weak Secander thus began.

SECANDER.

O stay thee, Agib, for my Feet deny,
No longer friendly to my Life, to fly.

Friend of my Heart, O turn thee and survey,
Trace our sad Flight thro' all its length of Way!
And first review that long-extended Plain,
And yon wide Groves, already past with Pain!
Yon ragged Cliff, whose dang'rous Path we try'd,
And last this lofty Mountain's weary Side!

AGIB.

Weak as thou art, yet hapless must thou know
The Toils of Flight, or some severer Woe!
Still as I haste, the Tartar shouts behind,
And Shrieks and Sorrows load the sad'ning Wind:
In rage of Heart, with Ruin in his Hand,
He blasts our Harvests, and deforms our Land.
Yon Citron Grove, whence first in Fear we came,
Droops its fair Honours to the conqu'ring Flame:
Far fly the Swains, like us, in deep Despair,
And leave to ruffian Bands their fleecy Care.

SECANDER.

Unhappy Land, whose Blessings tempt the Sword,
In vain, unheard, thou call'st thy Persian Lord!

In vain, thou court'st him, helpless to thine Aid,
To shield the Shepherd, and protect the Maid,
Far off in thoughtless Indolence resign'd,
Soft Dreams of Love and Pleasure sooth his Mind:
'Midst fair Sultanas lost in idle Joy,
No Wars alarm him, and no Fears annoy.

AGIB.

Yet these green Hills, in Summer's sultry Heat,
Have lent the Monarch oft a cool Retreat,
Sweet to the Sight is Zabran's flow'ry Plain,
And once by Maids and Shepherds lov'd in vain!
No more the Virgins shall delight to rove,
By Sargis' Banks or Irwan's shady Grove:
On Tarkie's Mountain catch the cooling Gale,
Or breathe the Sweets of Aly's flow'ry Vale:
Fair Scenes! but ah no more with Peace possest,
With Ease alluring, and with Plenty blest.
No more the Shepherds' whit'ning Tents appear,
Nor the kind Products of a bounteous Year;
No more the Date with snowy Blossoms crown'd,
But Ruin spreads her baleful Fires around.

Secander.

In vain Circassia boasts her spicy Groves,
For ever fam'd for pure and happy Loves:
In vain she boasts her fairest of the Fair,
Their Eyes' blue languish, and their golden Hair!
Those Eyes in Tears, their fruitless Grief must send,
Those Hairs the Tartar's cruel Hand shall rend.

Agib.

Ye Georgian Swains that piteous learn from far
Circassia's Ruin, and the Waste of War:
Some weightier Arms than Crooks andS taves prepare,
To shield your Harvests, and defend your Fair:
The Turk and Tartar like Designs pursue,
Fix'd to destroy, and stedfast to undo.
Wild as his Land, in native Deserts bred,
By Lust incited, or by Malice led,
The Villain-Arab, as he prowls for Prey,
Oft marks with Blood and wasting Flames the Way;
Yet none so cruel as the Tartar Foe,
To Death inur'd, and nurst in Scenes of Woe.

He said, when loud along the Vale was heard
A shriller Shriek, and nearer Fires appear'd:
Th' affrighted Shepherds thro' the Dews of Night
Wide o'er the Moon-light Hills renew'd their Flight.

The End of the FOURTH and Last
ECLOGUE.

VERSES HUMBLY ADDRESS'D TO SIR THOMAS HANMER ON HIS EDITION OF SHAKE-SPEAR'S WORKS

1743

AN EPISTLE:

ADDREST TO Sir *THOMAS HANMER*

On his Edition of *Shakespear's* WORKS.

Sir,

While born to bring the Muse's happier Days,
A Patriot's Hand protects a Poet's Lays:
While nurst by you she sees her Myrtles bloom,
Green and unwither'd o'er his honour'd Tomb:
Excuse her Doubts, if yet she fears to tell
What secret Transports in her Bosom swell:
With conscious Awe she hears the Critic's Fame,
And blushing hides her Wreath at Shakespear's Name.
Hard was the Lot those injur'd Strains endur'd,
Unown'd by Science, and by Years obscur'd:
Fair Fancy wept; and echoing Sighs confest
A fixt Despair in ev'ry tuneful Breast.
Not with more Grief th' afflicted Swains appear
When wintry Winds deform the plenteous Year:
When ling'ring Frosts the ruin'd Seats invade
Where Peace resorted, and the Graces play'd.

Each rising Art by just Gradation moves,
Toil builds on Toil, and Age on Age improves.

The Muse alone unequal dealt her Rage,
And grac'd with noblest Pomp her earliest Stage.
Preserv'd thro' Time, the speaking Scenes impart
Each changeful Wish of Phædra's tortur'd Heart:
Or paint the Curse, that mark'd the Theban's Reign,
A Bed incestuous, and a Father slain.
With kind Concern our pitying Eyes o'erflow,
Trace the sad Tale, and own another's Woe.

To Rome remov'd, with Wit secure to please,
The Comic Sisters kept their native Ease.
With jealous Fear declining Greece beheld
Her own Menander's Art almost excell'd!
But ev'ry Muse essay'd to raise in vain
Some labour'd Rival of her Tragic Strain;
Ilissus' Laurels, tho' transferr'd with Toil,
Droop'd their fair Leaves, nor knew th' unfriendly Soil.

As Arts expir'd, resistless Dulness rose;
Goths, Priests, or Vandals,—all were Learning's Foes.
Till Julius first recall'd each exil'd Maid,
And Cosmo own'd them in th' Etrurian Shade:
Then deeply skill'd in Love's engaging Theme,
The soft Provencial pass'd to Arno's Stream:
With graceful Ease the wanton Lyre he strung,
Sweet flow'd the Lays—but Love was all he sung.

The gay Description could not fail to move;
For, led by Nature, all are Friends to Love.

But Heav'n, still various in its Works, decreed
The perfect Boast of Time should last succeed.
The beauteous Union must appear at length,
Of Tuscan Fancy, and Athenian Strength:
One greater Muse Eliza's Reign adorn,
And ev'n a Shakespear to her Fame be born!

Yet ah! so bright her Morning's op'ning Ray,
In vain our Britain hop'd an equal Day!
No second Growth the Western Isle could bear,
At once exhausted with too rich a Year.
Too nicely Johnson knew the Critic's Part;
Nature in him was almost lost in Art.
Of softer Mold the gentle Fletcher came,
The next in Order, as the next in Name.
With pleas'd Attention 'midst his Scenes we find
Each glowing Thought, that warms the Female Mind;
Each melting Sigh, and ev'ry tender Tear,
The Lover's Wishes and the Virgin's Fear.
His ev'ry Strain the Smiles and Graces own;
But stronger Shakespear felt for Man alone:
Drawn by his Pen, our ruder Passions stand
Th' unrival'd Picture of his early Hand.

With gradual Steps, and slow, exacter France
Saw Art's fair Empire o'er her Shores advance:
By length of Toil, a bright Perfection knew,
Correctly bold, and just in all she drew.
Till late Corneille, with Lucan's spirit fir'd,
Breath'd the free Strain, as Rome and He inspir'd:
And classic Judgment gain'd to sweet Racine
The temp'rate Strength of Maro's chaster Line.

But wilder far the British Laurel spread,
And Wreaths less artful crown our Poet's Head.
Yet He alone to ev'ry Scene could give
Th' Historian's Truth, and bid the Manners live.
Wak'd at his Call I view, with glad Surprize,
Majestic Forms of mighty Monarchs rise.
There Henry's Trumpets spread their loud Alarms,
And laurel'd Conquest waits her Hero's Arms.
Here gentler Edward claims a pitying Sigh,
Scarce born to Honours, and so soon to die!
Yet shall thy Throne, unhappy Infant, bring
No Beam of Comfort to the guilty King?
The Time shall come, when Glo'ster's Heart shall bleed
In Life's last Hours, with Horror of the Deed:
When dreary Visions shall at last present
Thy vengeful Image, in the midnight Tent:
Thy Hand unseen the secret Death shall bear,
Blunt the weak Sword, and break th' oppressive Spear.

Where'er we turn, by Fancy charm'd, we find
Some sweet Illusion of the cheated Mind.
Oft, wild of Wing, she calls the Soul to rove
With humbler Nature, in the rural Grove;
Where Swains contented own the quiet Scene,
And twilight Fairies tread the circled Green:
Drest by her Hand, the Woods and Vallies smile,
And Spring diffusive decks th' *enchanted Isle.*

O more than all in pow'rful Genius blest,
Come, take thine Empire o'er the willing Breast!
Whate'er the Wounds this youthful Heart shall feel,
Thy Songs support me, and thy Morals heal!
There ev'ry Thought the Poet's Warmth may raise,
There native Music dwells in all the Lays.
O might some Verse with happiest Skill persuade
Expressive Picture to adopt thine Aid!
What wond'rous Draughts might rise from ev'ry Page!
What other Raphaels Charm a distant Age!

Methinks ev'n now I view some free Design,
Where breathing Nature lives in ev'ry Line:
Chast and subdu'd the modest Lights decay,
Steal into Shade, and mildly melt away.
—And see, where Anthony in Tears approv'd,
Guards the pale Relicks of the Chief he lov'd.

O'er the cold Corse the Warrior seems to bend,
Deep sunk in Grief, and mourns his murther'd Friend!
Still as they press, he calls on all around,
Lifts the torn Robe, and points the bleeding Wound.

But who is he, whose Brows exalted bear
A Wrath impatient, and a fiercer Air?
Awake to all that injur'd Worth can feel,
On his own Rome he turns th' avenging Steel.
Yet shall not War's insatiate Fury fall,
(So Heav'n ordains it) on the destin'd Wall.
See the fond Mother 'midst the plaintive Train
Hung on his Knees, and prostrate on the Plain!
Touch'd to the Soul, in vain he strives to hide
The Son's Affection, in the Roman's Pride:
O'er all the Man conflicting Passions rise,
Rage grasps the Sword, while Pity melts the Eyes.

Thus, gen'rous Critic, as thy Bard inspires,
The Sister Arts shall nurse their drooping Fires;
Each from his Scenes her Stores alternate bring,
Blend the fair Tints, or wake the vocal String:
Those Sibyl-Leaves, the Sport of ev'ry Wind,
(For Poets ever were a careless Kind)
By thee dispos'd, no farther Toil demand,
But, just to Nature, own thy forming Hand.

So spread o'er Greece, th' harmonious Whole unknown,
Ev'n Homer's Numbers charm'd by Parts alone.
Their own Ulysses scarce had wander'd more,
By Winds and Water cast on ev'ry Shore:
When, rais'd by Fate, some former Hanmer join'd
Each beauteous Image of the boundless Mind:
And bad, like Thee, his Athens ever claim,
A fond Alliance with the Poet's Name.

ODES ON SEVERAL DESCRIPTIVE AND ALLEGORIC SUBJECTS

1746

ODE *to* PITY.

O THOU, the Friend of Man assign'd,
With balmy Hands his Wounds to bind,
And charm his frantic Woe:
When first Distress with Dagger keen
Broke forth to waste his destin'd Scene,
His wild unsated Foe!

By Pella's Bard, a magic Name,
By all the Griefs his Thought could frame,
Receive my humble Rite:
Long, Pity, let the Nations view
Thy sky-worn Robes of tend'rest Blue,
And Eyes of dewy Light!

But wherefore need I wander wide
To old Ilissus' distant Side,
Deserted Stream, and mute?
Wild Arun too has heard thy Strains,
And Echo, 'midst my native Plains,
Been sooth'd by Pity's Lute.

There first the Wren thy Myrtles shed
On gentlest Otway's infant Head,
To Him thy Cell was shown;
And while He sung the Female Heart,
With Youth's soft Notes unspoil'd by Art,
Thy Turtles mix'd their own.

Come, Pity, come, by Fancy's Aid,
Ev'n now my Thoughts, relenting Maid,
Thy Temple's Pride design:
Its Southern Site, its Truth compleat
Shall raise a wild Enthusiast Heat,
In all who view the Shrine.

There Picture's Toils shall well relate,
How Chance, or hard involving Fate,
O'er mortal Bliss prevail:
The Buskin'd Muse shall near her stand,
And sighing prompt her tender Hand,
With each disastrous Tale.

There let me oft, retir'd by Day,
In Dreams of Passion melt away,
Allow'd with Thee to dwell:
There waste the mournful Lamp of Night,
Till, Virgin, Thou again delight
To hear a British Shell!

ODE *to* FEAR.

THOU, to whom the World unknown
With all its shadowy Shapes is shown;
Who see'st appall'd th' unreal Scene,
While Fancy lifts the Veil between:
Ah Fear! Ah frantic Fear!
I see, I see Thee near.
I know thy hurried Step, thy haggard Eye!
Like Thee I start, like Thee disorder'd fly,
For lo what Monsters in thy Train appear!
Danger, whose Limbs of Giant Mold
What mortal Eye can fix'd behold?
Who stalks his Round, an hideous Form,
Howling amidst the Midnight Storm,
Or throws him on the ridgy Steep
Of some loose hanging Rock to sleep:
And with him thousand Phantoms join'd,
Who prompt to Deeds accurs'd the Mind:
And those, the Fiends, who near allied,
O'er Nature's Wounds, and Wrecks preside;
Whilst Vengeance, in the lurid Air,
Lifts her red Arm, expos'd and bare:

On whom that rav'ning Brood of Fate,
Who lap the Blood of Sorrow, wait;
Who, Fear, this ghastly Train can see,
And look not madly wild, like Thee?

EPODE.

In earliest Grece to Thee with partial Choice,
The Grief-full Muse addrest her infant Tongue;
The Maids and Matrons, on her awful Voice,
Silent and pale in wild Amazement hung.

Yet He, the Bard who first invok'd thy Name,
Disdain'd in Marathon its Pow'r to feel:
For not alone he nurs'd the Poet's flame,
But reach'd from Virtue's Hand the Patriot's Steel.

But who is He whom later Garlands grace,
Who left a-while o'er Hybla's Dews to rove,
With trembling Eyes thy dreary Steps to trace,
Where Thou and Furies shar'd the baleful Grove?

Wrapt in thy cloudy Veil th' Incestuous Queen
Sigh'd the sad Call her Son and Husband hear'd,
When once alone it broke the silent Scene,
And He the Wretch of Thebes no more appear'd.

O Fear, I know Thee by my throbbing Heart,
Thy with'ring Pow'r inspir'd each mournful Line,
Tho' gentle Pity claim her mingled Part,
Yet all the Thunders of the Scene are thine!

ANTISTROPHE.

Thou who such weary Lengths hast past,
Where wilt thou rest, mad Nymph, at last?
Say, wilt thou shroud in haunted Cell,
Where gloomy Rape and Murder dwell?
Or, in some hollow'd Seat,
'Gainst which the big Waves beat,
Hear drowning Sea-men's Cries in Tempests brought!
Dark Pow'r, with shudd'ring meek submitted Thought
Be mine, to read the Visions old,
Which thy awak'ning Bards have told:
And lest thou meet my blasted View,
Hold each strange Tale devoutly true;
Ne'er be I found, by Thee o'eraw'd,
In that thrice-hallow'd Eve abroad,
When Ghosts, as Cottage-Maids believe,
Their pebbled Beds permitted leave,
And Gobblins haunt from Fire, or Fen,
Or Mine, or Flood, the Walks of Men!

O Thou whose Spirit most possest
The sacred Seat of Shakespear's Breast!
By all that from thy Prophet broke,
In thy Divine Emotions spoke:
Hither again thy Fury deal,
Teach me but once like Him to feel:
His Cypress Wreath my Meed decree,
And I, O Fear, will dwell with Thee!

ODE *to* SIMPLICITY.

O THOU by Nature taught,
To breathe her genuine Thought,
In Numbers warmly pure, and sweetly strong:
Who first on Mountains wild,
In Fancy loveliest Child,
Thy Babe, or Pleasure's, nurs'd the Pow'rs of Song!

Thou, who with Hermit Heart
Disdain'st the Wealth of Art,
And Gauds, and pageant Weeds, and trailing Pall:
But com'st a decent Maid
In Attic Robe array'd,
O chaste unboastful Nymph, to Thee I call!

By all the honey'd Store
On Hybla's Thymy Shore,
By all her Blooms, and mingled Murmurs dear,
By Her, whose Love-lorn Woe
In Ev'ning Musings slow
Sooth'd sweetly sad Electra's Poet's Ear:

By old Cephisus deep,
Who spread his wavy Sweep
In warbled Wand'rings round thy green Retreat,
On whose enamel'd Side
When holy Freedom died
No equal Haunt allur'd thy future Feet.

O Sister meek of Truth,
To my admiring Youth,
Thy sober Aid and native Charms infuse!
The Flow'rs that sweetest breathe,
Tho' Beauty cull'd the Wreath,
Still ask thy Hand to range their order'd Hues.

While Rome could none esteem
But Virtue's Patriot Theme,
You lov'd her Hills, and led her Laureate Band:
But staid to sing alone
To one distinguish'd Throne,
And turn'd thy Face, and fled her alter'd Land.

No more, in Hall or Bow'r,
The Passions own thy Pow'r,
Love, only Love her forceless Numbers mean:
For Thou hast left her Shrine,
Nor Olive more, nor Vine,
Shall gain thy Feet to bless the servile Scene.

Tho' Taste, tho' Genius bless,
To some divine Excess,
Faint's the cold Work till Thou inspire the whole;
What each, what all supply,
May court, may charm our Eye,
Thou, only Thou can'st raise the meeting Soul!

Of These let others ask,
To aid some mighty Task,
I only seek to find thy temp'rate Vale:
Where oft my Reed might sound
To Maids and Shepherds round,
And all thy Sons, O Nature, learn my Tale.

ODE *on the* POETICAL CHARACTER.

As once, if not with light Regard,
I read aright that gifted Bard,
(Him whose School above the rest
His Loveliest Elfin Queen has blest.)
One, only One, unrival'd Fair,
Might hope the magic Girdle wear,
At solemn Turney hung on high,
The Wish of each love-darting Eye;

Lo! to each other Nymph in turn applied,
As if, in Air unseen, some hov'ring Hand,
Some chaste and Angel-Friend to Virgin-Fame,
With whisper'd Spell had burst the starting Band,
It left unblest her loath'd dishonour'd Side;
Happier hopeless Fair, if never
Her baffled Hand with vain Endeavour
Had touch'd that fatal Zone to her denied!
Young Fancy thus, to me Divinest Name,
To whom, prepar'd and bath'd in Heav'n,
The Cest of amplest Pow'r is giv'n:
To few the God-like Gift assigns,
To gird their blest prophetic Loins,
And gaze her Visions wild, and feel unmix'd her Flame!

The Band, as Fairy Legends say,
Was wove on that creating Day,
When He, who call'd with Thought to Birth
Yon tented Sky, this laughing Earth,
And drest with Springs, and Forests tall,
And pour'd the Main engirting all,
Long by the lov'd Enthusiast woo'd,
Himself in some Diviner Mood,
Retiring, sate with her alone,
And plac'd her on his Saphire Throne,
The whiles, the vaulted Shrine around,
Seraphic Wires were heard to sound,
Now sublimest Triumph swelling,
Now on Love and Mercy dwelling;
And she, from out the veiling Cloud,
Breath'd her magic Notes aloud:
And Thou, Thou rich-hair'd Youth of Morn,
And all thy subject Life was born!
The dang'rous Passions kept aloof,
Far from the sainted growing Woof:
But near it sate Ecstatic Wonder,
List'ning the deep applauding Thunder:
And Truth, in sunny Vest array'd,
By whose the Tarsel's Eyes were made;
All the shad'wy Tribes of Mind,
In braided Dance their Murmurs join'd,

And all the bright uncounted Pow'rs
Who feed on Heav'n's ambrosial Flow'rs.
Where is the Bard, whose Soul can now
Its high presuming Hopes avow?
Where He who thinks, with Rapture blind,
This hallow'd Work for Him design'd?

High on some Cliff, to Heav'n up-pil'd,
Of rude Access, of Prospect wild,
Where, tangled round the jealous Steep,
Strange Shades o'erbrow the Valleys deep,
And holy Genii guard the Rock,
Its Gloomes embrown, its Springs unlock,
While on its rich ambitious Head,
An Eden, like his own, lies spread.
I view that Oak, the fanciest Glades among,
By which as Milton lay, His Ev'ning Ear,
From many a Cloud that drop'd Ethereal Dew,
Nigh spher'd in Heav'n its native Strains could hear:
On which that ancient Trump he reach'd was hung;
    Thither oft his Glory greeting,
    From Waller's Myrtle Shades retreating,
With many a Vow from Hope's aspiring Tongue,
My trembling Feet his guiding Steps pursue;
    In vain—Such Bliss to One alone,

Of all the Sons of Soul was known,
And Heav'n, and Fancy, kindred Pow'rs,
Have now o'erturn'd th' inspiring Bow'rs,
Or curtain'd close such Scene from ev'ry future View.

ODE,

Written in the beginning of the Year 1746.

How sleep the Brave, who sink to Rest,
By all their Country's Wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy Fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallow'd Mold,
She there shall dress a sweeter Sod,
Than Fancy's Feet have ever trod.

By Fairy Hands their Knell is rung,
By Forms unseen their Dirge is sung;
There Honour comes, a Pilgrim grey,
To bless the Turf that wraps their Clay,
And Freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping Hermit there!

ODE *to* MERCY.

STROPHE.

O THOU, who sit'st a smiling Bride
By Valour's arm'd and awful Side,
Gentlest of Sky-born Forms, and best ador'd:
Who oft with Songs, divine to hear,
Win'st from his fatal Grasp the Spear,
And hid'st in Wreaths of Flow'rs his bloodless Sword!
Thou who, amidst the deathful Field,
By Godlike Chiefs alone beheld,
Oft with thy Bosom bare art found,
Pleading for him the Youth who sinks to Ground:
See, Mercy, see, with pure and loaded Hands,
Before thy Shrine my Country's Genius stands,
And decks thy Altar still, tho' pierc'd with many a Wound!

ANTISTROPHE.

WHEN he whom ev'n our Joys provoke,
The Fiend of Nature join'd his Yoke,
And rush'd in Wrath to make our Isle his Prey;

Thy Form, from out thy sweet Abode,
O'ertook Him on his blasted Road,
And stop'd his Wheels, and look'd his Rage away.

I see recoil his sable Steeds,
That bore Him swift to Salvage Deeds,
Thy tender melting Eyes they own;
O Maid, for all thy Love to Britain shown,
Where Justice bars her Iron Tow'r,
To Thee we build a roseate Bow'r,
Thou, Thou shalt rule our Queen, and share our Monarch's Throne!

ODE *to* LIBERTY.

STROPHE.

WHO shall awake the Spartan Fife,
And call in solemn Sounds to Life,
The Youths, whose Locks divinely spreading,
  Like vernal Hyacinths in sullen Hue,
At once the Breath of Fear and Virtue shedding,
  Applauding Freedom lov'd of old to view?
What New Alcæus, Fancy-blest,
Shall sing the Sword, in Myrtles drest,
  At Wisdom's Shrine a-while its Flame concealing,
(What Place so fit to seal a Deed renown'd?)
  Till she her brightest Lightnings round revealing,
It leap'd in Glory forth, and dealt her prompted Wound!
    O Goddess, in that feeling Hour,
  When most its Sounds would court thy Ears,
    Let not my Shell's misguided Pow'r,
  E'er draw thy sad, thy mindful Tears.
No, Freedom, no, I will not tell,
How Rome, before thy weeping Face,
With heaviest Sound, a Giant-statue, fell,
Push'd by a wild and artless Race,
From off its wide ambitious Base,

When Time his Northern Sons of Spoil awoke,
And all the blended Work of Strength and Grace,
With many a rude repeated Stroke,
And many a barb'rous Yell, to thousand Fragments broke.

EPODE.

Yet ev'n, where'er the least appear'd,
Th' admiring World thy Hand rever'd;
Still 'midst the scatter'd States around,
Some Remnants of Her Strength were found;
They saw by what escap'd the Storm,
How wond'rous rose her perfect Form;
How in the great the labour'd Whole,
Each mighty Master pour'd his Soul!
For sunny Florence, Seat of Art,
Beneath her Vines preserv'd a part,
Till They, whom Science lov'd to name,
(O who could fear it?) quench'd her Flame.
And lo, an humbler Relick laid
In jealous Pisa's Olive Shade!
See small Marino joins the Theme,
Tho' least, not last in thy Esteem:
Strike, louder strike th' ennobling Strings
To those whose Merchant Sons were Kings;

To Him, who deck'd with pearly Pride,
In Adria weds his green-hair'd Bride;
Hail Port of Glory, Wealth, and Pleasure,
Ne'er let me change this Lydian Measure:
Nor e'er her former Pride relate,
To sad Liguria's bleeding State.
Ah no! more pleas'd thy Haunts I seek,
On wild Helvetia's Mountains bleak:
(Where, when the favor'd of thy Choice,
The daring Archer heard thy Voice;
Forth from his Eyrie rous'd in Dread,
The rav'ning Eagle northward fled.)
Or dwell in willow'd Meads more near,
With Those to whom Thy Stork is dear:
Those whom the Rod of Alva bruis'd,
Whose Crown a British Queen refus'd!
The Magic works, Thou feel'st the Strains,
One holier Name alone remains;
The perfect Spell shall then avail,
Hail Nymph, ador'd by Britain, Hail!

ANTISTROPHE.

Beyond the Measure vast of Thought,
The Works, the Wizzard Time has wrought!

The Gaul, 'tis held of antique Story,
Saw Britain link'd to his now adverse Strand,
No Sea between, nor Cliff sublime and hoary,
He pass'd with unwet Feet thro' all our Land.
To the Blown Baltic then, they say,
The wild Waves found another way,
Where Orcas howls, his wolfish Mountains rounding;
Till all the banded West at once 'gan rise,
A wide wild Storm ev'n Nature's self confounding,
With'ring her Giant Sons with strange uncouth Surprise.
This pillar'd Earth so firm and wide,
By Winds and inward Labors torn,
In Thunders dread was push'd aside,
And down the should'ring Billows born.
And see, like Gems, her laughing Train,
The little Isles on ev'ry side,
Mona, once hid from those who search the Main,
Where thousand Elfin Shapes abide,
And Wight who checks the west'ring Tide,
For Thee consenting Heav'n has each bestow'd,
A fair Attendant on her sov'reign Pride:
To Thee this blest Divorce she ow'd,
For thou hast made her Vales thy lov'd, thy last Abode!

SECOND EPODE.

Then too, 'tis said, an hoary Pile,
'Midst the green Navel of our Isle,
Thy Shrine in some religious Wood,
O Soul-enforcing Goddess stood!
There oft the painted Native's Feet,
Were wont thy Form celestial meet:
Tho' now with hopeless Toil we trace
Time's backward Rolls, to find its place;
Whether the fiery-tressed Dane,
Or Roman's self o'erturn'd the Fane,
Or in what Heav'n-left Age it fell,
'Twere hard for modern Song to tell.
Yet still, if Truth those Beams infuse,
Which guide at once, and charm the Muse,
Beyond yon braided Clouds that lie,
Paving the light-embroider'd Sky:
Amidst the bright pavilion'd Plains,
The beauteous Model still remains.
There happier than in Islands blest,
Or Bow'rs by Spring or Hebe drest,
The Chiefs who fill our Albion's Story,
In warlike Weeds, retir'd in Glory,
Hear their consorted Druids sing
Their Triumphs to th' immortal String.

How may the Poet now unfold
What never Tongue or Numbers told?
How learn delighted, and amaz'd,
What Hands unknown that Fabric rais'd?
Ev'n now before his favor'd Eyes,
In Gothic Pride it seems to rise!
Yet Græcia's graceful Orders join,
Majestic thro' the mix'd Design;
The secret Builder knew to chuse,
Each sphere-found Gem of richest Hues:
Whate'er Heav'n's purer Mold contains,
When nearer Suns emblaze its Veins;
There on the Walls the Patriot's Sight,
May ever hang with fresh Delight,
And, grav'd with some Prophetic Rage,
Read Albion's Fame thro' ev'ry Age.
Ye Forms Divine, ye Laureate Band,
That near her inmost Altar stand!
Now sooth Her, to her blissful Train
Blithe Concord's social Form to gain:
Concord, whose Myrtle Wand can steep
Ev'n Anger's blood-shot Eyes in Sleep:
Before whose breathing Bosom's Balm,
Rage drops his Steel, and Storms grow calm;
Her let our Sires and Matrons hoar
Welcome to Britain's ravag'd Shore,

Our Youths, enamour'd of the Fair,
Play with the Tangles of her Hair,
Till in one loud applauding Sound,
The Nations shout to Her around,
O how supremely art thou blest,
Thou, Lady, Thou shalt rule the West!

ODE, *to a Lady on the Death of Colonel* Ross *in the Action of* Fontenoy.

WHILE, lost to all his former Mirth,
Britannia's Genius bends to Earth,
And mourns the fatal Day:
While stain'd with Blood he strives to tear
Unseemly from his Sea-green Hair
The Wreaths of chearful May:

The Thoughts which musing Pity pays,
And fond Remembrance loves to raise,
Your faithful Hours attend:
Still Fancy to Herself unkind,
Awakes to Grief the soften'd Mind,
And points the bleeding Friend.

By rapid Scheld's descending Wave
His Country's Vows shall bless the Grave.
Where'er the Youth is laid:
That sacred Spot the Village Hind
With ev'ry sweetest Turf shall bind,
And Peace protect the Shade.

Blest Youth, regardful of thy Doom,
Aërial Hands shall build thy Tomb,
With shadowy Trophies crown'd:
Whilst Honor bath'd in Tears shall rove
To sigh thy Name thro' ev'ry Grove,
And call his Heros round.

The warlike Dead of ev'ry Age,
Who fill the fair recording Page,
Shall leave their sainted Rest:
And, half-reclining on his Spear,
Each wond'ring Chief by turns appear,
To hail the blooming Guest.

Old Edward's Sons, unknown to yield,
Shall croud from Cressy's laurell'd Field,
And gaze with fix'd Delight:
Again for Britain's Wrongs they feel,
Again they snatch the gleamy Steel,
And wish th' avenging Fight.

But lo where, sunk in deep Despair,
Her Garments torn, her Bosom bare,
Impatient Freedom lies!
Her matted Tresses madly spread,
To ev'ry Sod, which wraps the Dead,
She turns her joyless Eyes.

Ne'er shall she leave that lowly Ground,
Till Notes of Triumph bursting round
Proclaim her Reign restor'd:
Till William seek the sad Retreat,
And bleeding at her sacred Feet,
Present the sated Sword.

If, weak to sooth so soft an Heart,
These pictur'd Glories nought impart,
To dry thy constant Tear:
If yet, in Sorrow's distant Eye,
Expos'd and pale thou see'st him lie,
Wild War insulting near:

Where'er from Time Thou court'st Relief,
The Muse shall still, with social Grief,
Her gentlest Promise keep:
Ev'n humbled Harting's cottag'd Vale
Shall learn the sad repeated Tale,
And bid her Shepherds weep.

ODE *to* EVENING.

If ought of Oaten Stop, or Pastoral Song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest Ear,
Like thy own solemn Springs,
Thy Springs, and dying Gales,
O Nymph reserv'd, while now the bright-hair'd Sun
Sits in yon western Tent, whose cloudy Skirts,
With Brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy Bed:
Now Air is hush'd, save where the weak-ey'd Bat,
With short shrill Shriek flits by on leathern Wing,
Or where the Beetle winds
His small but sullen Horn,
As oft he rises 'midst the twilight Path,
Against the Pilgrim born in heedless Hum:
Now teach me, Maid compos'd,
To breathe some soften'd Strain,
Whose Numbers stealing thro' thy darkning Vale,
May not unseemly with its Stillness suit,
As musing slow, I hail
Thy genial lov'd Return!

For when thy folding Star arising shews
His paly Circlet, at his warning Lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in Flow'rs the Day,
And many a Nymph who wreaths her Brows with Sedge,
And sheds the fresh'ning Dew, and lovelier still,
The Pensive Pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy Car.

Then lead, calm Vot'ress, where some sheety Lake,
Cheers the lone Heath, or some time-hallow'd Pile,
Or up-land Fallows grey
Reflect it's last cool Gleam.
But when chill blust'ring Winds, or driving Rain,
Forbid my willing Feet, be mine the Hut,
That from the Mountain's Side,
Views Wilds, and swelling Floods,
And Hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd Spires,
And hears their simple Bell, and marks o'er all
Thy Dewy Fingers draw
The gradual dusky Veil.

While Spring shall pour his Show'rs, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing Tresses, meekest Eve!
While Summer loves to sport,
Beneath thy ling'ring Light:

While sallow Autumn fills thy Lap with Leaves,
Or Winter yelling thro' the troublous Air,
Affrights thy shrinking Train,
And rudely rends thy Robes,
So long sure-found beneath thy sylvan Shed,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, rose-lip'd Health,
Thy gentlest Influence own,
And hymn thy fav'rite Name!

ODE *to* PEACE.

O THOU, who bad'st thy Turtles bear
Swift from his Grasp thy golden Hair,
And sought'st thy native Skies:
When War, by Vultures drawn from far,
To Britain bent his Iron Car,
And bad his Storms arise!

Tir'd of his rude tyrannic Sway,
Our Youth shall fix some festive Day,
His sullen Shrines to burn:
But Thou who hear'st the turning Spheres,
What Sounds may charm thy partial Ears,
And gain thy blest Return!

O Peace, thy injur'd Robes up-bind,
O rise, and leave not one behind
Of all thy beamy Train:
The British Lion, Goddess sweet,
Lies stretch'd on Earth to kiss thy Feet,
And own thy holier Reign.

Let others court thy transient Smile,
But come to grace thy western Isle,
By warlike Honour led!
And, while around her Ports rejoice,
While all her Sons adore thy Choice,
With Him for ever wed!

The MANNERS, *An* ODE.

FAREWELL, for clearer Ken design'd,
The dim-discover'd Tracts of Mind:
Truths which, from Action's Paths retir'd,
My silent Search in vain requir'd!
No more my Sail that Deep explores,
No more I search those magic Shores,
What Regions part the World of Soul,
Or whence thy Streams, Opinion, roll:
If e'er I round such Fairy Field,
Some Pow'r impart the Spear and Shield,
At which the Wizzard Passions fly,
By which the Giant Follies die!

Farewell the Porch, whose Roof is seen,
Arch'd with th' enlivening Olive's Green:
Where Science, prank'd in tissued Vest,
By Reason, Pride, and Fancy drest,
Comes like a Bride so trim array'd,
To wed with Doubt in Plato's Shade!

Youth of the quick uncheated Sight,
Thy Walks, Observance, more invite!
O Thou, who lov'st that ampler Range,
Where Life's wide Prospects round thee change,

And with her mingling Sons ally'd,
Throw'st the prattling Page aside:
To me in Converse sweet impart,
To read in Man the native Heart,
To learn, where Science sure is found,
From Nature as she lives around:
And gazing oft her Mirror true,
By turns each shifting Image view!
Till meddling Art's officious Lore,
Reverse the Lessons taught before,
Alluring from a safer Rule,
To dream in her enchanted School;
Thou Heav'n, whate'er of Great we boast,
Hast blest this social Science most.
Retiring hence to thoughtful Cell,
As Fancy breathes her potent Spell,
Not vain she finds the charmful Task,
In Pageant quaint, in motley Mask,
Behold before her musing Eyes,
The countless Manners round her rise;
While ever varying as they pass,
To some Contempt applies her Glass:
With these the white rob'd Maids combine,
And those the laughing Satyrs join!
But who is He whom now she views,
In Robe of wild contending Hues?

Thou by the Passions nurs'd, I greet
The comic Sock that binds thy Feet!
O Humour, Thou whose Name is known
To Britain's favor'd Isle alone:
Me too amidst thy Band admit,
There where the young-eyed healthful Wit,
(Whose Jewels in his crisped Hair
Are plac'd each other's Beams to share,
Whom no Delights from Thee divide)
In Laughter loos'd attends thy Side!
By old Miletus who so long
Has ceas'd his Love-inwoven Song:
By all you taught the Tuscan Maids,
In chang'd Italia's modern Shades:
By Him, whose Knight's distinguish'd Name
Refin'd a Nation's Lust of Fame;
Whose Tales ev'n now, with Echos sweet,
Castilia's Moorish Hills repeat:
Or Him, whom Seine's blue Nymphs deplore,
In watchet Weeds on Gallia's Shore,
Who drew the sad Sicilian Maid,
By Virtues in her Sire betray'd:
O Nature boon, from whom proceed
Each forceful Thought, each prompted Deed;
If but from Thee I hope to feel,
On all my Heart imprint thy Seal!

Let some retreating Cynic find,
Those oft-turn'd Scrolls I leave behind,
The Sports and I this Hour agree,
To rove thy Scene-full World with Thee!

The PASSIONS, *An* ODE *for Music.*

WHEN Music, Heav'nly Maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft to hear her Shell,
Throng'd around her magic Cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's Painting;
By turns they felt the glowing Mind,
Disturb'd, delighted, rais'd, refin'd.
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fir'd,
Fill'd with Fury, rapt, inspir'd,
From the supporting Myrtles round,
They snatch'd her Instruments of Sound,
And as they oft had heard a-part
Sweet Lessons of her forceful Art,
Each, for Madness rul'd the Hour,
Would prove his own expressive Pow'r.

First Fear his Hand, its Skill to try,
Amid the Chords bewilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd he knew not why,
Ev'n at the Sound himself had made.

Next Anger rush'd, his Eyes on fire,
In Lightnings own'd his secret Stings,
In one rude Clash he struck the Lyre,
And swept with hurried Hand the Strings.

With woful Measures wan Despair
Low sullen Sounds his Grief beguil'd,
A solemn, strange, and mingled Air,
'Twas sad by Fits, by Starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope, with Eyes so fair,
What was thy delightful Measure?
Still it whisper'd promis'd Pleasure,
And bad the lovely Scenes at distance hail!

Still would Her Touch the Strain prolong,
And from the Rocks, the Woods, the Vale,
She call'd on Echo still thro' all the Song;
And, where Her sweetest Theme She chose,
A soft responsive Voice was heard at ev'ry Close,
And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd Her golden Hair.
And longer had She sung,—but with a Frown,
Revenge impatient rose,
He threw his blood-stain'd Sword in Thunder down,
And with a with'ring Look,
The War-denouncing Trumpet took,
And blew a Blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er Prophetic Sounds so full of Woe.

And ever and anon he beat
The doubling Drum with furious Heat;
And tho' sometimes each dreary Pause between,
Dejected Pity at his Side,
Her Soul-subduing Voice applied,
Yet still He kept his wild unalter'd Mien,
While each strain'd Ball of Sight seem'd bursting from his Head.

Thy Numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fix'd,
Sad Proof of thy distressful State,
Of diff'ring Themes the veering Song was mix'd,
And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on Hate.

With Eyes up-rais'd, as one inspir'd,
Pale Melancholy sate retir'd,
And from her wild sequester'd Seat,
In Notes by Distance made more sweet,
Pour'd thro' the mellow Horn her pensive Soul:
And dashing soft from Rocks around,
Bubbling Runnels join'd the Sound:
Thro' Glades and Glooms the mingled Measure stole,
Or o'er some haunted Stream with fond Delay,
Round an holy Calm diffusing,
Love of Peace, and lonely Musing,
In hollow Murmurs died away.

But O how alter'd was its sprightlier Tone!
When Chearfulness, a Nymph of healthiest Hue,
Her Bow a-cross her Shoulder flung,
Her Buskins gem'd with Morning Dew,
Blew an inspiring Air, that Dale and Thicket rung,
The Hunter's Call to Faun and Dryad known!
The Oak-crown'd Sisters, and their chast-eye'd Queen,
Satyrs and sylvan Boys were seen,
Peeping from forth their Alleys green;
Brown Exercise rejoic'd to hear,
And Sport leapt up, and seiz'd his Beechen Spear.

Last came Joy's Ecstatic Trial,
He with viny Crown advancing,
First to the lively Pipe his Hand addrest,
But soon he saw the brisk awak'ning Viol,
Whose sweet entrancing Voice he lov'd the best.
They would have thought who heard the Strain,
They saw in Tempe's Vale her native Maids,
Amidst the festal sounding Shades,
To some unwearied Minstrel dancing,
While as his flying Fingers kiss'd the Strings,
Love fram'd with Mirth, a gay fantastic Round,
Loose were Her Tresses seen, her Zone unbound,
And He amidst his frolic Play,
As if he would the charming Air repay,
Shook thousand Odours from his dewy Wings.

SALEM COLLEGE
LIBRARY
Winston-Salem, N. C.

O Music, Sphere-descended Maid,
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's Aid,
Why, Goddess, why to us deny'd?
Lay'st Thou thy antient Lyre aside?
As in that lov'd Athenian Bow'r,
You learn'd an all-commanding Pow'r,
Thy mimic Soul, O Nymph endear'd,
Can well recall what then it heard.
Where is thy native simple Heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise as in that elder Time,
Warm, Energic, Chaste, Sublime!
Thy Wonders in that God-like Age,
Fill thy recording Sister's Page—
'Tis said, and I believe the Tale,
Thy humblest Reed could more prevail,
Had more of Strength, diviner Rage,
Than all which charms this laggard Age,
Ev'n all at once together found,
Cæcilia's mingled World of Sound—
O bid our vain Endeavors cease,
Revive the just Designs of Greece,
Return in all thy simple State!
Confirm the Tales Her Sons relate!

ODE OCCASION'D BY THE DEATH OF MR. THOMSON

1749

TO

GEORGE LYTTELTON, Esq:

THIS

ODE

IS INSCRIB'D BY

The AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT

THE Scene of the following STANZAS is ſuppos'd to lie on the *Thames* near *Richmond*.

ODE ON THE DEATH of Mr. *THOMSON*

In yonder Grave a Druid lies
Where slowly winds the stealing Wave!
The Year's best Sweets shall duteous rise
To deck it's Poet's sylvan Grave!

In yon deep Bed of whisp'ring Reeds
His airy Harp shall now be laid,
That He, whose Heart in Sorrow bleeds,
May love thro' Life the soothing Shade.

Then Maids and Youths shall linger here,
And while it's Sounds at distance swell,
Shall sadly seem in Pity's Ear
To hear the Woodland Pilgrim's Knell.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the Shore
When Thames in Summer-wreaths is drest,
And oft suspend the dashing Oar
To bid his gentle Spirit rest!

And oft as Ease and Health retire
To breezy Lawn, or Forest deep,
The Friend shall view yon whit'ning Spire,
And 'mid the varied Landschape weep.

But Thou, who own'st that Earthy Bed,
Ah! what will ev'ry Dirge avail?
Or Tears, which Love and Pity shed
That mourn beneath the gliding Sail!

Yet lives there one, whose heedless Eye
Shall scorn thy pale Shrine glimm'ring near?
With Him, Sweet Bard, may Fancy die,
And Joy desert the blooming Year.

But thou, lorn Stream, whose sullen Tide
No sedge-crown'd Sisters now attend,
Now waft me from the green Hill's Side
Whose cold Turf hides the buried Friend!

And see, the Fairy Valleys fade,
Dun Night has veil'd the solemn View!
—Yet once again, Dear parted Shade
Meek Nature's Child again adieu!

The genial Meads assign'd to bless
Thy Life, shall mourn thy early Doom,
Their Hinds, and Shepherd-Girls shall dress
With simple Hands thy rural Tomb.

Long, long, thy Stone and pointed Clay
Shall melt the musing Briton's Eyes,
O! Vales, and Wild Woods, shall He say
In yonder Grave Your Druid lies!

ODE ON THE POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND

1749

AN ODE

ON THE POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND,

CONSIDERED AS THE SUBJECT OF POETRY.

INSCRIBED TO MR. JOHN HOME.

HOME! thou return'st from Thames, whose Naiads long
Have seen thee ling'ring with a fond delay,
Mid those soft friends, whose hearts, some future day,
Shall melt, perhaps, to hear thy tragic song.
Go, not unmindful of that cordial youth
Whom, long endear'd, thou leav'st by Lavant's side;
Together let us wish him lasting truth,
And joy untainted, with his destin'd bride.
Go! nor regardless, while these numbers boast
My short-liv'd bliss, forget my social name;
But think, far off, how, on the southern coast,
I met thy friendship with an equal flame!
Fresh to that soil thou turn'st, where ev'ry vale
Shall prompt the Poet, and his song demand:
To thee thy copious subjects ne'er shall fail;
Thou need'st but take thy pencil to thy hand,
And paint what all believe, who own thy genial land.

There, must thou wake perforce thy Doric quill;
'Tis Fancy's land to which thou sett'st thy feet;
Where still, 'tis said, the Fairy people meet
Beneath each birken shade, on mead or hill.
There, each trim lass, that skims the milky store,
To the swart tribes their creamy bowls allots;
By night they sip it round the cottage-door,
While airy minstrels warble jocund notes.
There, every herd, by sad experience, knows
How, wing'd with Fate, their elf-shot arrows fly,
When the sick ewe her summer food foregoes,
Or, stretch'd on earth, the heart-smit heifers lie.
Such airy beings awe th' untutor'd swain:
Nor thou, tho' learn'd, his homelier thoughts neglect;
Let thy sweet Muse the rural faith sustain;
These are the themes of simple, sure effect,
That add new conquests to her boundless reign,
And fill, with double force, her heart-commanding strain.

Ev'n yet preserv'd, how often may'st thou hear,
Where to the pole the Boreal mountains run,
Taught by the father to his list'ning son
Strange lays, whose power had charm'd a Spenser's ear.
At every pause, before thy mind possest,
Old Runic bards shall seem to rise around,
With uncouth lyres, in many-colour'd vest,

Their matted hair with boughs fantastic crown'd:
Whether thou bid'st the well-taught hind repeat
The choral dirge, that mourns some chieftain brave,
When every shrieking maid her bosom beat,
And strew'd with choicest herbs his scented grave;
Or whether, sitting in the shepherd's shiel,
Thou hear'st some sounding tale of war's alarms;
When at the bugle's call, with fire and steel,
The sturdy clans pour'd forth their brawny swarms,
And hostile brothers met, to prove each other's arms.

'Tis thine to sing, how framing hideous spells
In Sky's lone isle the gifted wizzard seer,
Lodged in the wintry cave with [Fate's fell spear,]
Or in the depth of Uist's dark forests dwells:
How they, whose sight such dreary dreams engross,
With their own visions oft astonish'd droop,
When, o'er the wat'ry strath, or quaggy moss,
They see the gliding ghosts unbodied troop.
Or if in sports, or on the festive green,
Their [destin'd] glance some fated youth descry,
Who now, perhaps, in lusty vigour seen,
And rosy health, shall soon lamented die.
For them the viewless forms of air obey;
Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair:
They know what spirit brews the stormful day,

And heartless, oft like moody madness stare
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.

[To monarchs dear, some hundred miles astray,
Oft have they seen Fate give the fatal blow!
The Seer, in Sky, shriek'd as the blood did flow,
When headless Charles warm on the scaffold lay!
As Boreas threw his young Aurora forth,
In the first year of the first George's reign,
And battles rag'd in welkin of the North,
They mourn'd in air, fell, fell rebellion slain!
And as, of late, they joy'd in Preston's fight,
Saw, at sad Falkirk, all their hopes near crown'd!
They rav'd! divining, through their Second Sight,
Pale, red Culloden, where these hopes were drown'd!
Illustrious William! Britain's guardian name!
One William sav'd us from a tyrant's stroke:
He, for a sceptre, gain'd heroic fame,
But thou, more glorious, Slavery's chain hast broke,
To reign a private man, and bow to Freedom's yoke.

These, too, thou'lt sing! for well thy magic Muse
Can to the topmost heaven of grandeur soar,
Or stoop to wail the swain that is no more!
Ah homely swains! your homeward steps ne'er lose;

Let not dank Will mislead you to the heath;
Dancing in mirky night o'er fen and lake,
He glows to draw you downward to your death,
In his bewitched, low, marshy, willow brake:]
What though far off, from some dark dell espied,
His glimmering mazes cheer the excursive sight,
Yet turn, ye wanderers, turn your steps aside,
Nor trust the guidance of that faithless light;
For watchful, lurking mid the unrustling reed,
At those mirk hours the wily monster lies,
And listens oft to hear the passing steed,
And frequent round him rolls his sullen eyes,
If chance his savage wrath may some weak wretch surprise.

Ah, luckless swain, o'er all unblest indeed!
Whom late bewilder'd in the dank, dark fen,
Far from his flocks, and smoking hamlet, then!
To that sad spot [where hums the sedgy weed]:
On him, enrag'd, the fiend, in angry mood,
Shall never look with Pity's kind concern,
But instant, furious, raise the whelming flood,
O'er its drown'd banks, forbidding all return!
Or, if he meditate his wish'd escape,
To some dim hill, that seems uprising near,
To his faint eye, the grim and grisly shape,

In all its terrors clad, shall wild appear.
Meantime the wat'ry surge shall round him rise,
Pour'd sudden forth from every swelling source!
What now remains but tears and hopeless sighs?
His fear-shook limbs have lost their youthful force,
And down the waves he floats, a pale and breathless corse!

For him in vain his anxious wife shall wait,
Or wander forth to meet him on his way;
For him, in vain, at to-fall of the day,
His babes shall linger at the unclosing gate!
Ah, ne'er shall he return! Alone, if night
Her travell'd limbs in broken slumbers steep,
With drooping willows drest, his mournful sprite
Shall visit sad, perchance, her silent sleep:
Then he, perhaps, with moist and watery hand,
Shall fondly seem to press her shuddering cheek,
And with his blue-swoln face before her stand,
And, shivering cold, these piteous accents speak:
'Pursue, dear wife, thy daily toils, pursue,
At dawn or dusk, industrious as before;
Nor e'er of me one helpless thought renew,
While I lie weltering on the osier'd shore,
Drown'd by the Kelpie's wrath, nor e'er shall aid thee more!'

But oh! o'er all, forget not Kilda's race,
On whose bleak rocks, which brave the wasting tides,
Fair Nature's daughter, Virtue, yet abides.
Go, just, as they, their blameless manners trace!
Then to my ear transmit some gentle song
Of those whose lives are yet sincere and plain,
Their bounded walks the rugged cliffs along,
And all their prospect but the wintry main.
With sparing temperance, at the needful time,
They drain the sainted spring, or, hunger-prest,
Along the Atlantic rock undreading climb,
And of its eggs despoil the solan's nest.
Thus blest in primal innocence they live,
Suffic'd and happy with that frugal fare
Which tasteful toil and hourly danger give.
Hard is their shallow soil, and bleak and bare;
Nor ever vernal bee was heard to murmur there!

Unbounded is thy range; with varied stile
Thy Muse may, like those feathery tribes which spring
From their rude rocks, extend her skirting wing
Round the moist marge of each cold Hebrid isle,
To that hoar pile which still its ruins shows:
In whose small vaults a pigmy-folk is found,
Whose bones the delver with his spade upthrows,
And culls them, wondering, from the hallow'd ground!

Or thither where beneath the showery west
The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid:
Once foes, perhaps, together now they rest.
No slaves revere them, and no wars invade:
Yet frequent now, at midnight solemn hour,
The rifted mounds their yawning cells unfold,
And forth the Monarchs stalk with sovereign power
In pageant robes, and wreath'd with sheeny gold,
And on their twilight tombs aerial council hold.

Nor need'st thou blush, that such false themes engage
Thy gentle mind, of fairer stores possest;
For not alone they touch the village breast,
But fill'd, in elder time, the historic page,
There, Shakspeare's self, with every garland crown'd,
[Flew to those fairy climes his fancy sheen,]
In musing hour, his wayward sisters found,
And with their terrors drest the magic scene.
From them he sung, when mid his bold design,
Before the Scot, afflicted and aghast,
The shadowy kings of Banquo's fated line,
Through the dark cave in gleamy pageant past.
Proceed! nor quit the tales which, simply told,
Could once so well my answering bosom pierce;
Proceed, in forceful sounds, and colours bold,
The native legends of thy land rehearse;
To such adapt thy lyre, and suit thy powerful verse.

In scenes like these, which, daring to depart
From sober truth, are still to Nature true,
And call forth fresh delight to Fancy's view,
The heroic Muse employ'd her Tasso's art!
How have I trembled, when at Tancred's stroke,
Its gushing blood the gaping cypress pour'd;
When each live plant with mortal accents spoke,
And the wild blast upheav'd the vanish'd sword!
How have I sat, when pip'd the pensive wind,
To hear his harp, by British Fairfax strung,—
Prevailing poet, whose undoubting mind
Believ'd the magic wonders which he sung!
Hence, at each sound, imagination glows;
[Hence, at each picture, vivid life starts here;]
Hence his warm lay with softest sweetness flows;
Melting it flows, pure, murmuring, strong and clear,
And fills the impassion'd heart, and wins th' harmonious ear.

All hail, ye scenes that o'er my soul prevail,
Ye [splendid] friths and lakes which, far away,
Are by smooth Annan fill'd, or pastoral Tay,
Or Don's romantic springs; at distance, hail!
The time shall come when I, perhaps, may tread
Your lowly glens, o'erhung with spreading broom,
Or o'er your stretching heaths, by fancy led:

[Or o'er your mountains creep in awful gloom.]
Then will I dress once more the faded bow'r,
Where Jonson sat in Drummond's classic shade;
Or crop, from Tiviotdale, each [lyric flower,]
And mourn, on Yarrow's banks, [where Willy's laid!]
Meantime, ye Powers that on the plains which bore
The cordial youth, on Lothian's plains, attend,
Where'er Home dwell, on hill, or lowly moor,
To him I lose, your kind protection lend,
And, touch'd with love like mine, preserve my absent friend.

MINOR PIECES

1739-1754

On a QUACK DOCTOR

SEVENTH son of Doctor John,
Physician and Chirurgeon,
Who hath travell'd wide and far,
Man-Midwife to a Man of War,
In Chichester hath ta'en a House,
Hippocrates Hippocratous....

SONNET.

WHEN Phœbe form'd a wanton smile,
My soul! it reach'd not here!
Strange, that thy peace, thou trembler, flies
Before a rising tear!

From midst the drops, my love is born,
That o'er those eyelids rove:
Thus issued from a teeming wave
The fabled queen of love.

SONG.

THE SENTIMENTS BORROWED FROM SHAKESPEARE.

YOUNG Damon of the Vale is dead,
Ye lowland hamlets moan,
A dewy turf lies o'er his head,
And at his feet a stone.

His shroud, which Death's cold damps destroy,
Of snow-white threads was made,
All mourn'd to see so sweet a boy
In earth for ever laid.

Pale pansies o'er his corpse were plac'd,
Which, pluck'd before their time,
Bestrew'd the boy, like him to waste,
And wither in their prime.

But will he ne'er return, whose tongue
Cou'd tune the rural lay?
Ah, no! his bell of peace is rung,
His lips are cold as clay.

They bore him out at twilight hour,
The youth belov'd so well:
Ah me! how many a true-love show'r
Of kind remembrance fell!

Each maid was woe—but Lucy chief,
Her grief o'er all was tried;
Within his grave she drop'd in grief,
And o'er her lov'd-one died.

A Song from Shakespear's CYMBELINE,

SUNG BY GUIDERIUS AND ARVIRAGUS OVER FIDELE, SUPPOS'D TO BE DEAD.

To fair Fidele's grassy Tomb
Soft Maids and Village Hinds shall bring
Each op'ning Sweet, of earliest Bloom,
And rifle all the breathing Spring.

No wailing Ghost shall dare appear
To vex with Shrieks this quiet Grove;
But Shepherd Lads assemble here,
And melting Virgins own their Love.

No wither'd Witch shall here be seen,
No Goblins lead their nightly Crew:
The Female Fays shall haunt the Green,
And dress thy Grave with pearly Dew!

The Redbreast oft at Ev'ning Hours
Shall kindly lend his little Aid:
With hoary Moss, and gather'd Flow'rs,
To deck the Ground where thou art laid.

When howling Winds, and beating Rain,
In Tempests shake the sylvan Cell:
Or midst the Chace on ev'ry Plain
The tender Thought on thee shall dwell.

Each lonely Scene shall thee restore,
For thee the Tear be duly shed:
Belov'd till Life could charm no more;
And mourn'd till Pity's self be dead.

THE BELL OF ARRAGON

He also showed us (says T. Warton) another ode, of two or three four-lined stanzas, on a tradition that anciently, just before a king of Spain died, the great bell of the cathedral of Sarragossa, in Arragon, tolled spontaneously. It began thus:

THE bell of Arragon, they say,
Spontaneous speaks the fatal day. . . .

Soon afterwards were these lines,

Whatever dark aërial power
Commissioned haunts the gloomy tower.

The last stanza consisted of a moral transition to his own death and knell, which he called

Some simpler bell.

WRITTEN ON A PAPER, WHICH CONTAINED A PIECE OF BRIDE CAKE: GIVEN TO THE AUTHOR BY A LADY.

YE curious hands, that hid from vulgar eyes,
By search profane shall find this hallow'd cake,
With Virtue's awe forbear the sacred prize,
Nor dare a theft for Love and Pity's sake!

This precious relick, form'd by magic power
Beneath the shepherd's haunted pillow laid,
Was meant by Love to charm the silent hour,
The secret present of a matchless maid.

The Cyprian queen, at Hymen's fond request,
Each nice ingredient chose with happiest art;
Fears, sighs, and wishes of th' enamour'd breast,
And pains that please are mixt in every part.

With rosy hand the spicy fruit she brought
From Paphian hills, and fair Cythera's isle;
And temper'd sweet with these the melting thought,
The kiss ambrosial and the yielding smile.

Ambiguous looks, that scorn and yet relent,
Denials mild, and firm unalter'd truth,
Reluctant pride, and amorous faint consent,
And meeting ardours, and exulting youth,

Sleep, wayward God! hath sworn while these remain,
With flattering dreams to dry his nightly tear,
And chearful Hope, so oft invok'd in vain,
With fairy songs shall sooth his pensive ear

If bound by vows to Friendship's gentle side,
And fond of soul, thou hop'st an equal grace,
If youth or maid thy joys and griefs divide,
O much intreated, leave this fatal place.

Sweet Peace, who long hath shunn'd my plaintive day,
Consents at length to bring me short delight,
Thy careless steps may scare her doves away,
And Grief with raven note usurp the night.

POEMS OF DOUBTFUL AUTHENTICITY

An ODE to the PEOPLE of GREAT BRITAIN.

In Imitation of the Sixth Ode of the Third Book of Horace.

BRITON! the Thunder of the Wrath divine,
Due to thy Father's Crimes, and long with-held from Thine,
Shall burst with tenfold Rage on thy devoted Head;
Unless with conscious Terrors aw'd,
By meek, heart-struck Repentance led,
Suppliant thou fall before th' offended God:
If haply yet thou may'st avert his Ire;
And stay his Arm out-stretch'd to launch th' avenging Fire.

Did not High God of old ordain,
When to thy Grasp he gave the Sceptre of the Main,
That Empire in this favour'd Land,
Fix'd on Religion's solid Base should stand?
When from thy struggling Neck he broke
Th' inglorious, galling, Papal yoke,
Humbled the pride of haughty Spain,
And freed thee by the Woman-Hero's hand;

He then confirm'd the strong Decree:
" Briton, be virtuous and be free;
" Be Truth, be Sanctity thy Guide:
" Be humble: fear thy God; and fear thou none beside."

Oft has th' offended Pow'r his rising Anger shewn:
Led on by his avenging Hand
Rebellion triumphs in the Land:
Twice have her barbarous Sons our War-train'd Hosts o'erthrown.
They fell a cheap inglorious Prey;
Th' ambitious Victor's Boast was half suppressed,
While Heav'n-bred Fear, and wild Dismay,
Unman'd the Warrior's Heart, and reign'd in ev'ry Breast.

Her Arms to foreign Lands Britannia bore;
Her Arms, auspicious now no more!
With frequent Conquest where the Sires were crown'd,
The Sons ill-fated fell, and bit the hostile Ground:
The tame, War-trading Belgian fled,
While in his Cause the Briton bled:
The Gaul stood wond'ring at his own Success;
Oft did his hardiest Bands their wonted Fears confess,
Struck with Dismay, and meditating Flight:

While the brave Foe still urg'd th' unequal Fight,
While William with his Father's Ardour fir'd
Through all th' undaunted Host the generous Flame inspir'd.

But heavier far the Weight of Shame
That sunk Britannia's Naval Fame:
In vain she spreads her once-victorious Sails:
Or Fear, or Rashness, in her Chiefs prevails;
And wildly these prevent, those basely shun the Fight:
Content with humble Praise, the Foe
Avoids the long-impending Blow;
Improves the kind Escape, and triumphs in his Flight.

The monstrous Age, which still encreasing Years debase,
Which teems with unknown Crimes, and genders new Disgrace,
First, unrestrain'd by Honour, Faith, or Shame,
Confounding ev'ry sacred Name,
The hallow'd nuptial Bed with lawless Lust profan'd:
Deriv'd from this polluted Source
The dire Corruption held its Course
Through the whole canker'd Race, and tainted all the Land.

The rip'ning Maid is vers'd in ev'ry dangerous Art,
That ill adorns the Form while it corrupts the Heart:

Practis'd to dress, to dance, to play,
In wanton Mask to lead the Way,
To move the pliant Limbs, to roll the luring Eye;
With Folly's gayest Partizans to vye
In empty Noise and vain Expence;
To celebrate with flaunting Air
The Midnight Revels of the Fair;
Studious of ev'ry Praise, but Virtue, Truth, and Sense.

Thus lesson'd in Intrigue, her early Thought improves,
Nor meditates in vain forbidden Loves:
Soon the gay Nymph, as Nature leads, shall rove
Free and at large amid th' Idalian Grove;
Or hap'ly jealous of the Voice of Fame,
Mask'd in the Matron's sober Name,
With many a well-dissembled Wile
The kind, convenient Husband's Care beguile;
More deeply vers'd in Venus' mystic Lore,
Yet for such meaner Arts too lofty and sublime,
The proud, high-born, Patrician Whore,
Bears unabash'd her Front; and glories in her Crime.

Hither from City and from Court
The Votaries of Love resort;
The Rich, the Great, the Gay and the Severe;
The pension'd Architect of Laws,
The Patriot loud in Virtue's Cause;

Proud of imputed Worth, the Peer:
Regardless of his Faith, his Country, or his Name,
He pawns his Honour and Estate,
Nor reckons at how dear a Rate
He purchases Disease, and Servitude, and Shame.

Not from such dastard Sires, to ev'ry Virtue lost,
Sprung the brave Youth which Britain once could boast:
Who curb'd the Gaul's usurping Sway,
Who swept th' unnumbered Hosts away,
In Agincourt, and Cressy's glorious Plain;
Who dy'd the Seas with Spanish Blood,
Their vainly-vaunted Fleets subdu'd,
And spread the mighty Wreck o'er all the vanquish'd Main.

No;—'twas a generous Race, by Worth transmissive known;
In their bold Breasts their Father's Spirit glow'd;
In their pure Veins their Mother's Virtue flow'd;
They made hereditary Praise their own.
The Sire his emulous Offspring led
The rougher Paths of Fame to tread;

The Matron train'd their spotless Youth
In Honour, Sanctity and Truth;
Form'd by th' united Parents' Care,
The Sons, tho' bold, were wise; the Daughters chaste, tho' fair.

How Time, all-wasting, ev'n the worst impairs,
And each foul Age to Dregs still fouler runs!
Our Sires more vicious ev'n than theirs
Left us, still more degen'rate Heirs,
To spawn a baser Brood of monster-breeding Sons.

PROLOGUE to VENICE PRESERV'D.

Acted by Some Young Gentlemen at
WINCHESTER SCHOOL.

As some clean Housewife's hospitable Care
Serves to her Guests good wholsome Country Fare,
Such as her own domestic Stores afford,
With willing Hand she spreads the homely Board,
Where Neatness and Simplicity impart
A Taste unknown to Luxury and Art:
Such is our Aim to-night; by means like these,
'Tis our Ambition's humble Care to please.

To Pomp and Shew we make no vain Pretence,
We feast you here with Nature and with Sense:
With Otway's Scenes. With early Genius blest,
Here first the Muse the tender Bard possess'd;
And here, where first the pow'rful Impulse came,
He learnt to guide the Heav'n-descended Flame:
Yet easy still, nor o'er-refin'd by Art,
He speaks the native Language of the Heart.
Attend; these Scenes your just Regard demand:
See Treason's Sons, a dire infernal Band,
Loose to the sacred Ties of human kind,
In dark Society of Guilt combin'd!
Whom lawless Lust of Pow'r, and brutal Rage,
And black Revenge, in horrid League engage,
T' invade their peaceful Country's sacred Rest;
To plunge their ruthless Daggers in her Breast;
To whelm in Ruin the Venetian State:
Attend; and tremble for Britannia's Fate.

PROLOGUE

TO HOME'S "DOUGLAS"

In ancient times, when Britain's trade was arms,
And the lov'd music of her youth alarms,
A godlike race sustain'd fair England's fame:
Who has not heard of gallant Piercy's name?

Aye, and of Douglas? such illustrious foes
In rival Rome and Carthage never rose!
From age to age bright shone the British fire,
And ev'ry hero was a hero's sire;
When powerful Fate decreed one warrior's doom,
Up sprung the phoenix from his parent's tomb.
But whilst those generous rivals fought and fell,
Those generous rivals lov'd each other well:
Tho' many a bloody field was lost and won,
Nothing in hate, in honour all was done.
When Piercy, wrong'd, defy'd his prince or peers,
Fast came the Douglas with his Scottish spears:
And, when proud Douglas made his King his foe,
For Douglas, Piercy bent his English bow.
Expell'd their native homes by adverse Fate,
They knock'd alternate at each other's gate:
Then blaz'd the castle, at the midnight hour,
For him whose arms had shook its firmest tow'r.
This night a Douglas your protection claims;
A wife! a mother! Pity's softest names:
The story of her woes indulgent hear,
And grant your suppliant all she begs, a tear.
In confidence she begs; and hopes to find
Each English breast like noble Piercy's kind.

PROLOGUE

TO "DOUGLAS," SPOKEN AT EDINBURGH

In days of classic fame, when Persia's Lord
Oppos'd his millions to the Grecian sword,
Flourish'd the state of Athens; small her store,
Rugged her soil, and rocky was her shore,
Like Caledonia's: yet she gain'd a name
That stands unrivall'd in the rolls of fame.
Such proud pre-eminence not valour gave,
(For who than Sparta's dauntless sons more brave?)
But learning, and the love of every art
That virgin Pallas and the Muse impart.
Above the rest the Tragic Muse admir'd
Each Attic breast with noblest passions fir'd.
In peace their poets with their heroes shar'd
Glory, the hero's, and the bard's reward.
The Tragic Muse each glorious record kept,
And o'er the king she conquer'd, Athens wept.[1]
Here let me cease, impatient for the scene,
To you I need not praise the Tragic Queen:
Oft has this audience soft compassion shown
To woes of heroes, heroes not their own.

[1] See the *Persia* of Aeschylus.

This night our scenes no common tear demand,
He comes, the hero of your native land!
Douglas, a name thro' all the world renown'd
A name that rouses like the trumpets sound!
Oft have your fathers, prodigal of life,
A Douglas follow'd thro' the bloody strife;
Hosts have been known at that dread name to yield,
And, Douglas dead, his name hath won the field.
Listen attentive to the various tale,
Mark if the author's kindred feelings fail;
Sway'd by alternate hopes, alternate fears,
He waits the test of your congenial tears.
If they shall flow, back to the Muse he flies,
And bids your heroes in succession rise;
Collects the wand'ring warriors as they roam,
Douglas assures them of a welcome home.

EPILOGUE

TO "DOUGLAS."

An Epilogue I ask'd; but not one word
Our bard will write. He vows 'tis most absurd
With comic wit to contradict the strain
Of Tragedy, and make your sorrows vain.

Sadly he says, that Pity is the best,
And noblest passion of the human breast:
For when its sacred streams the heart o'erflow,
In gushes pleasure with the tide of woe;
And when its waves retire, like those of Nile,
They leave behind 'em such a golden soil,
That there the Virtues without culture grow,
There the sweet blossoms of Affection blow.
These were his words; void of delusive art
I felt them: for he spoke them from his heart.
Nor will I now attempt, with witty folly,
To chase away celestial Melancholy.

ON THE USE AND ABUSE OF POETRY

Antistrophe II.

Such was wise Orpheus' moral song,
The lonely cliffs and caves among:
From hollow oak, or mountain-den,
He drew the naked, gazing men;
Or where in turf-built sheds, or rushy bowers,
They shiver'd in cold wintry showers,
Or sunk in heapy snows;
Then sudden, while his melting music stole
With powerful magic o'er each softening soul,
Society, and law, and sacred order rose.

Epode II.

Father of peace and arts! he first the city built;
No more the neighbour's blood was by his neighbour spilt;
He taught to till, and separate the lands;
He fix'd the roving youths in Hymen's myrtle bands;

Whence dear domestic life began,
And all the charities that soften'd man;
The babes that in their fathers' faces smil'd,
With lisping blandishments their rage beguil'd,
And tender thoughts inspir'd. . . .

NOTES

NOTES

PERSIAN ECLOGUES

COLLINS was pleased to accompany his poems with brief explanatory references. Those for the " Persian Eclogues " are:

P. 44. *Balsora's Pearls.* The Gulph of that Name, famous for the Pearl-fishery.

P. 52. *Gay-motley'd Pinks, etc.* That these Flowers are found in very great Abundance in some of the Provinces of Persia, see the *Modern History* of the ingenious Mr. Salmon.

The text underwent small change between 1742 and 1757, a few awkwardnesses of grammar or sense being revised. In particular Collins modified the suggestions of eastern exactitude. " Sweet and od'rous, like an Eastern Bride " and " Eastern Legends say " were altered to the text given. On the other hand the two pretty lines about the fields of rice and maize, in Eclogue III, were inserted in 1757 in the printed poem.

The pastorals of Pope, Parnell, and Lyttelton seem to have moved Collins at this early period. The " painted fan " of Hassan was probably found by him in the " Faerie Queene " (III, xii, st. 8), and in the fourth Eclogue he charmingly varies a line from Pope's " Iliad " (xviii, 50),

> " And the blue languish of soft Alia's eye."

In turn, Collins's Eclogues hinted to Chatterton his " African Eclogues." When Chatterton wrote

> " Let me like midnight Cats, or Collins sing,"

he was not rewarding evil for good; he was aiming at a very different poet, Emanuel Collins of Bristol.

It will not escape notice that the " Persian Eclogues " are

chiefly love-poems, and may have been meant to charm the "shepherd-maid" of Collins's shy choice. The first Eclogue enlarges upon the theme of the song "When Phoebe form'd a wanton smile." If the fineness of Collins's nature requires any test, let him be judged by the shining honour and ideal in his allusions to love matters, here, and many years later in the verses on the paper containing a piece of bride-cake.

These "Eclogues" show at once the occasional redundancy, the more usual purity and distillation, the metrical music of Collins, and are connected in many small links with his subsequent work. For delicate emotional rhythm, the passage in Eclogue III on Zara is a masterpiece. The "Persian Eclogues" besides being printed separately and in the "Poetical Calendar" were included in Pearch's well-read "Collection." Scott of Amwell, in his essay on them (*Critical Essays*, 1785), tells us, that they "were always till lately possessed of considerable reputation, but our celebrated Biographer (Dr. Johnson) having hinted that Collins, once in conversation with a friend, happened to term them his Irish Eclogues, those who form their opinions not from their own reason, or their own feelings, have caught the hint, and circulated it."

EPISTLE TO HANMER

From Warton's reminiscences it is known that Collins was enthusiastic for Shakespearean scholarship, even in his later days. The "Epistle to Hanmer" was written before he knew the problems involved in textual investigation, or he could not have said that the plays "no farther toil demand" from editors. The notes of Collins are:

P. 64. *the Theban's Reign.* The Œdipus of Sophocles.

P. 64. *Julius.* Julius the Second, the immediate Predecessor of Leo the Tenth.

P. 65. *Fletcher . . . Shakspear.* Their Characters are thus distinguished by Mr. Dryden.

P. 66. *With gradual Steps.* About the Time of Shakespear, the Poet Hardy was in great Repute in France. He wrote, according

to Fontenelle, six hundred Plays. The French Poets after him applied themselves in general to the correct Improvement of the Stage, which was almost totally disregarded by those of our own Country, Johnson excepted.

P. 66. *Lucan's spirit.* The favourite Author of the elder Corneille.

P. 66. *The Time shall come.*

> " Tempus erit Turno, magno cum optaverit emptum.
> Intactum Pallanta," etc.

P. 67. *Anthony.* See the Tragedy of Julius Caesar.

P. 68. *But who is he?* Coriolanus. See Mr. Spence's Dialogue on the Odyssey.

Collins was not quite at home in this kind of rhetorical poem, and between the first text and the second, which Dodsley reprinted in his Collection, and is given above, there are large differences. The opening passage is obscure in the first version as in the second:

> While, own'd by You, with Smiles the Muse surveys
> Th' expected Triumph of her sweetest Lays:
> While, stretch'd at Ease, she boasts your Guardian Aid,
> Secure, and happy in her sylvan Shade:
> Excuse her Fears, who scarce a Verse bestows,
> In just Remembrance of the Debt she owes;
> With conscious Awe she hears the Critic's Fame,
> And blushing hides her Wreath at Shakespear's Name.

> Long slighted Fancy, with a Mother's Care,
> Wept o'er his Works, and felt the last Despair.
> Torn from her Head, she saw the Roses fall,
> By all deserted, tho' admir'd by all.
> " And oh! she cry'd, shall Science still resign
> " Whate'er is Nature's, and whate'er is mine?
> " Shall Taste and Art, but shew a cold Regard,
> " And scornful Pride reject th' unletter'd Bard?

" Ye myrtled Nymphs, who own my gentle Reign,
" Tune the sweet Lyre, and grace my airy Train!
" If, where ye rove, your searching Eyes have known
" One perfect Mind, which Judgment calls its own:
" There ev'ry Breast its fondest Hopes must bend,
" And ev'ry Muse with Tears await her Friend.

'Twas then fair Isis from her Stream arose,
In kind Compassion of her Sister's Woes.
'Twas then she promis'd to the mourning Maid
Th' immortal Honours, which thy Hands have paid:
" My best-lov'd Son (she said) shall yet restore
" Thy ruin'd Sweets, and Fancy weep no more. . . .

* * *

To Rome remov'd, with equal Pow'r to please,
The Comic Sisters kept their native Ease. . . .

* * *

Instead of " As Arts expir'd ":

When Rome herself, her envy'd Glories dead,
No more Imperial, stoop'd her conquer'd Head:
Luxuriant Florence chose a softer Theme,
While all was Peace, by Arno's silver Stream.
With sweeter Notes th' Etrurian Vales complain'd,
And Arts reviving told—a Cosmo reign'd.
Their wanton Lyres the Bards of Provence strung,
Sweet flow'd the Lays, but Love was all they sung. . . .

* * *

Till late Corneille from Epick Lucan brought
The full Expression, and the Roman Thought. . . .

* * *

Instead of " O more than all," etc.:

O blest in all that Genius gives to charm,
Whose Morals mend us, and whose Passions warm!

Oft let my Youth attend thy various Page,
Where rich Invention rules th' unbounded Stage.
There ev'ry Scene the Poet's Warmth may raise,
And melting Music find the softest Lays.
O might the Muse with equal Ease persuade,
Expressive Picture, to adopt thine Aid!
Some pow'rful Raphael shou'd again appear,
And Arts consenting fix their Empire here.

Methinks ev'n now I view some fair Design,
Where breathing Nature lives in ev'ry Line:
Chaste, and subdu'd, the modest Colours lie,
In fair Proportion to th' approving Eye.—
And see, where Antony lamenting stands
In fixt Distress, and spreads his pleading Hands!
O'er the pale Corse the Warrior seems to bend....

* * *

But who is he, whose Brows exalted bear
A Rage impatient, and a fiercer Air?
Ev'n now, his Thoughts with eager Vengeance doom
The last sad Ruin of ungrateful Rome.
Till, slow-advancing o'er the tented Plain,
In sable Weeds, appear the Kindred-train:
The frantic Mother lends their wild Despair,
Beats her swoln Breast, and rends her silver Hair.
And see he yields!... the Tears unbidden start,
And conscious Nature claims th' unwilling Heart!
O'er all the Man....

* * *

Each beauteous Image of the tuneful Mind.

ODES

The numerous aspects of threatened or actual war in the "Odes" have a vivid parallel in Spershott's "Memoirs of Chichester": "1745. The Great Alarm here, of the French

being Landed at Pemsey Marsh, which news arrived by a Special Messenger from Arondel about the middle of the night, and so carried on to Havant, Portsmouth, etc. Immediately Drums beat to Arms all over the Town, the Soldiers were drawn up, the Gates all shut and guarded, no Person admitted without being first Examined. Messengers sent every way into the country to warn them to get ready with all weapons possible, the Beacon was lighted upon the top of Rook's Hill, which alarumed the Country far around. All were getting their Guns ready, Casting Bullets, etc. . . . And all the next day, the Inhabitants were Loitering in the streets with sad Countenances, not knowing what to Think or Say, waiting for further Inteligence."

In spite of the failure of the " Odes " in Millar's edition, three of them were presently included in Dodsley's Collection, and the others later in Pearch's supplementing volumes; besides the " Poetical Calendar's " reprint of them all in 1763, and one in Warton's " Union," 1753 and 1759. Dodsley used the most perfect form of the " Ode to Evening." The text now given is that of 1746, with those corrections preserved in Dodsley and the " Union." It is singular how often the Odes of Collins have invited the hand of the imitator. The latest improver was William Allingham, who in his " Nightingale Valley," that favourite anthology, gives the " Ode to Evening " with an added stanza on domestic comforts.

The Ode to Pity has Collins's footnotes:

Pella's bard. Euripides, of whom Aristotle pronounces, on a Comparison of him with Sophocles, that he was the greater Master of the tender Passions, *ἦν τραγικώτερος.*

Wild Arun. The River Arun runs by the Village in Sussex, where Otway had his Birth.

In Collins's time, Otway was considered " with Shakespeare." See Thomson's " Winter ":

> " Dread o'er the scene the ghost of Hamlet stalks;
> Othello rages; poor Monimia mourns;
> And Belvidera pours her soul in love."

It was proposed about 1820 that, like Collins, Otway should

have a memorial in Chichester Cathedral; but nothing was done. Keats in his "Ode to Psyche" takes up and enriches the idea of a temple from this poem of Collins.

The ODE TO FEAR is annotated by Collins:

that ravening Brood of Fate. Alluding to the Κύνας ἄφυκτους of Sophocles. See the Electra.

Yet he, the Bard. Æschylus.

th' incestuous Queen. Jocasta.

the sad call.

—οὐδ' ἔτ ὠρωρει βοή.
Ἦν μὲν σιωπή· φθέγμα δ' ἐξαίφνης τινὸς
Θώυξεν αὐτόν, ὥστε πάντας ὀρθίας
Στῆσαι φοβῳ δείσαντας ἐξαίφνης τρίχας.

See the Œdip. Colon. of Sophocles.

Collins's imagination passes through the Grecian terrors, and then returns home to the region of Comus and Lear. The "Theodore and Honoria" of Dryden was probably in his mind throughout.

In the ODE TO SIMPLICITY, Collins notes

Her, whose love-lorn Woe. The ἀηδών, or Nightingale, for which Sophocles seems to have entertained a peculiar Fondness. He therefore means by "sad Electra's poet" Sophocles. Milton used that expression for Euripides, and therefore Collins has been censured for "bad scholarship." His fault is merely to have used a confusing phrase; his scholarship is correct, for he is referring to a passage in the "Electra" of Sophocles. This Ode is in detail and design instructed by Milton. Its allegorical richness—"blooms" in the sense of poems, for instance—will be perceived.

From the ODE ON THE POETICAL CHARACTER Coleridge apparently conceived some of his dream-scenery in "Kubla Khan." Collins begins with an allusion to the "Faerie Queene":

Unrivalled Fair. Florimel. See Spenser, Leg. 4th. "The cest" is from the same:

"That goodly Belt was Cestus hight by name."

"The Tarsel" appears in Spenser as "the tassel"—a male hawk. Collins's vision of the Creator, Thought, wedding Fancy, and begetting the Poetical Character, was formerly considered irreverent. The movement of the Ode, its "braided dance," is glorious.

The ODE TO MERCY was written in apprehension that Lord Balmerino and other captured rebels of the Forty-Five might be executed at the Tower (August 1746). They were.

Then follows, with magnificent abruptness, the ODE TO LIBERTY. Collins does not explain that "the locks, divinely spreading" of the Spartan youths had a meaning. To quote a schoolbook known to Collins, the privileges of Sparta's soldiers were "to have costly Arms, and fine Cloaths, and frequently perfume themselves, and curl their Hair: Whence we read that Xerxes was struck with Admiration, when the Scouts brought him Word, the Lacedaemonian Guards were at Gymnical Sports, and curling their Hair." On the other hand, Collins explains the succeeding interrogation by "Alluding to that beautiful Fragment of Alcaeus," which he transcribes: Ἐν μύρτου κλαδὶ τὸ ξιφος φορήσω—"In a garland of myrtle I'll carry my sword." It was a great favourite with him, and is several times suggested in the Odes. For ascribing it to Alcaeus, Collins is again blamed as a "bad scholar," but he must not be judged out of his period.

"In William's time
Such error was not counted crime,"

for scholars generally thought Alcaeus was the author.

Other notes by Collins are:

thy Shell's misguided Pow'r. Μὴ μὴ ταῦτα λέγωμες, ἃ δάκρνον ἤγαγε Δηοῖ. Callimach. Ὕμνος εἰς Δήμητρα.

Till they. The family of the Medici.

Small Marino. The little Republic of San Marino.

To those. The Venetians.

To him. The Doge of Venice.

To sad Liguria. Genoa.

Wild Helvetia. Switzerland.

With Those, to whom thy Stork is dear. The Dutch, amongst whom are very severe Penalties for those who are convicted of killing this Bird. They are kept tame in almost all their Towns, and particularly at the Hague, of the Arms of which they make a Part. The common People of Holland are said to entertain a superstitious Sentiment, that if the whole Species of them should become extinct, they should lose their Liberties.

A British Queen. Queen Elizabeth.

The Gaul. . . . This Tradition is mention'd by several of our old Historians. Some naturalists, too, have endeavour'd to support the Probability of the Fact by Arguments drawn from the correspondent Disposition of the two opposite Coasts. I don't remember that any Poetical Use has been hitherto made of it.

Mona. There is a Tradition in the Isle of Man, that a Mermaid becoming enamour'd of a young Man of extraordinary Beauty, took an Opportunity of meeting him one day as he walked on the Shore, and opened her Passion to him, but was receiv'd with a Coldness, occasion'd by his Horror and Surprize at her Appearance. This however was so misconstrued by the Sea-Lady, that in revenge for his Treatment of her, she punish'd the whole Island, by covering it with a Mist, so that all who attempted to carry on any Commerce with it, either never arriv'd at it, but wander'd up and down the Sea, or were on a sudden wreck'd upon its Cliffs.

Collins had probably read Waldron's "Description of the Isle of Man," 1731, which recorded many legends.

Sismondi's drab "Italian Republics" may be consulted for further appreciation of Collins's life-giving historic sense. The Italian translator of the "Odes" in 1814 cautiously omitted "To Liberty." The story of Alva's tyrannies in the Netherlands, and of Queen Elizabeth's opposition to them, had been told in Sir William Temple's "Observations" (8th ed., 1747); in which book also the ancient "Neck of Land between Dover and Calais" is discussed.

The ODE TO A LADY is not the best. I have preserved in the

text two stanzas omitted in the later version (Dodsley). The other variants are:

Stanza IV as it stood in Dodsley's " Museum ":

> Ev'n now, regardful of his Doom,
> Applauding Honour haunts his Tomb,
> With shadowy Trophies crown'd:
> Whilst Freedom's Form beside her roves
> Majestic thro' the twilight Groves,
> And calls her Heroes round.

In Dodsley's " Collection ":

> O'er him, whose doom thy virtues grieve,
> Aërial forms shall sit at eve
> And bend the pensive head!
> And, falln to save his injur'd land,
> Imperial Honor's awful hand
> Shall point his lonely bed!

Stanza VI, according to Warton, began " Old Edward's Sons, untaught to yield "; Stanza IX, " If, drawn by all a lover's art." Stanzas VII and VIII were omitted in the " Museum " and Dodsley.

How Sleep the Brave is the perfection which grew out of the imperfect Ode preceding it. Affection, imagination, and chastity of style could go little further. The Greek Anthology has taught him this brevity, and—if we may follow Matthew Arnold—the Celtic spirit creates these supernatural presences.

In the text of the Ode to Evening, the readings of Dodsley's version, where there is a difference, are preferred. Collins was here very subtle in his corrections, whether they were for the sake of melody or significance. (Of the first, the change from " May hope, O pensive eve " to " May hope, chaste Eve " is an example.) The following are the excluded readings:

l. 2, 3. May hope, O pensive Eve, to soothe thine Ear,
Like thy own brawling Springs,

l. 6. Sits on yon western Tent [Dodsley, 1765].

l. 24. Who slept in Buds.

l. 27. The Pensive Pleasure's sweet [*Union*, 1759].

l. 29, etc. Then let me rove some wild and heathy Scene,
Or find some Ruin 'midst its dreary Dells
Whose Walls more awful nod
By thy religious Gleams.
Or if chill blustring Winds, or driving Rain
Forbid my willing Feet,

l. 49, etc. So long regardful of thy quiet Rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
Thy gentlest Influence own,
And love thy fav'rite name.

"Thy" sylvan shed, or "the" sylvan shed, is debated. Warton's "Union" says "thy."

"To Evening" is formed in two principal passages, the first inspiration coming to a natural pause on the word "veil" (line 40); and then a new and conclusive impulse follows. The first passage has further divisions: invocation, Evening's portraiture, and the scenery under her influence. Besides the immediate object of his delight, Collins by allusion recalls and honours the previous poets of Evening—as Milton, Fletcher, Shakespeare, and Spenser. He has felt, through their fancy as through his own, that the *dramatis personae* of Evening may be in themselves widely different but are all made of one importance by the fantasy of the time. The sun, the folding star, the beetle and the bat are all in the secret. It is in this poem that the evening bell, by which Collins is haunted, is heard most movingly; I think I find its translated summons in "while *now* the bright-hair'd sun," "*Now* air is hushed," and the final "*Now* teach me." The repeated adverb "where" in the third stanza is a touch of genius, for by it we perceive the wide stillness in which a supreme distinctness belongs to these small beings and events. But all the poem is touched with similar art, at once making a tranquillity and its enrichments.

The word "brede" in line 7, which Keats uses in a different meaning in the "Grecian Urn," will be found in the poems of John Philips, Akenside, and Gilbert White, with particular

allusion to the colours of the rainbow. The sun's " wavy bed " may localize the poem, in connection with " the lone heath " and " up-land fallows "; at least it is best to read Collins on the downs above his native city, among the pigmy yews and junipers, with the creeks of the Channel gleaming from the distance. " Thy shadowy car " (l. 28) is affectionately opposed to " the gilded car of day " in Milton. The " fallows grey " are especially those of his neighbourhood, strewn with chalk-stones. " From the mountain's side " is a hint of his beloved " Cymbeline "—and Gilbert White also sees the Downs as mountains. Diffused here too is the appreciation of a romantic passage in Pope's " Eloisa and Abelard," from which, I imagine, Collins drew the phrase " dying gales." Like Keats, he conceives all, nature and art and poetry, as his universe, to re-create it as he will. Keats in the " Ode to Autumn " has followed Collins in the general setting, and some details, of his poem. " Thou hast thy music too " is the first note in Collins, and instead of the bat and beetle Keats's Spirit is attended by the gnat and swallow. The silvered fallows of Collins were never far from the " stubble-plains " touched " with rosy hue " of the later genius. Indeed, in Collins, Chatterton, and Keats we have almost a single poet.

Collins's poem is called rhymeless, but its rich tones are due to his wonderful sense of rhyme. The English language is not to be transformed into poetry without that sense, whether actually rhyme is employed or not. In these stanzas, full-sounding syllables end the lines, and echoes and assonances play, like the slow rumours of twilight, through all. I must not enter now into a disquisition which would be called technical, though in truth it is the ear which still decides, even in our age of modern verse audacities, whether a poet's emotions shall reach the inmost attention of others. It is the difference between Collins's rhyme-power and the dull or weak faculty in others which has made so many failures among the many imitations of the " Evening " stanza.

Such imitations at length became frequent; but the earliest which I have noticed are all that need be named here. They are the three (" Content," " A Summer's Morning," " Health ")

in " The Shrubs of Parnassus," 1760, by J. Copywell. That was the pen-name of William Woty, who had a share in making Collins better known through the " Poetical Calendar." A specimen of Woty:

> Now spangled o'er with drops of chrystal dew,
> Shines ev'ry tree-top, ev'ry verdant bush:
> Now springs the herald lark,
> And flutters up the air,
> Proclaims with gladness the return of light,
> And calls up all his fellows of the wing.
> His fellows of the wing
> Awake, and join the song,
> From warbling Linnet, and melodious Thrush,
> Down to the Sparrow chirping on the Spray,
> Down to the twitling Finch,
> And emulative Wren.

Among the subscribers to Woty's book is Collins's friend " Mr. Hardham. 2 books."

The ODE TO PEACE opens with a sculpturesque proposal. Its allusion is clearly to the alarms of 1745, and the Lion is like that one in the " Faerie Queene " who found Una in the wood and

> kist her wearie feet,
> And lickt her lilly hands with fawning tong;
> As he her wronged innocence did weet.

It was presumed by Langhorne that THE MANNERS was written when Collins left Oxford. Not less probably, it is an imaginative adieu to philosophical reading, even Aristotle's Poetics, and a welcome to the romances and novels of the age. Collins's footnotes are:

Old Miletus. Alluding to the Milesian Tales, some of the earliest Romances.

By Him. Cervantes.

Or Him. Monsieur Le Sage, Author of the incomparable

Adventures of Gil Blas de Santillane, who died in Paris in the Year 1745.

Le Sage died in 1747. Collins had evidently been misled by a "much exaggerated report." In the earlier part of "The Manners" are found germs of magnificent images in Wordsworth and Keats; and Collins amusingly compares himself among the philosophers to the heroes of the chap-books, Thomas Thumb the Great, Sir Thomas Hickathrift, Knight, and above all, Jack the Giant-Killer.

When Dr. Hayes set THE PASSIONS to music for performance at Oxford, a concluding passage "by another hand" was substituted in order to give Madness a chance of applause. Among the actors who were clever at declaiming this Ode were John Henderson and J. P. Kemble. One can quickly fancy the old school attitudinizing and striking the imaginary lyre. In Dodsley's "Museum" for August 29th 1747 there is "An Enquiry into the Nature of the Passions," especially Jealousy, with an examination of the possible Italian sources of Shakespeare's "Othello." Collins succeeded in rivalling the similar Odes, on Saint Cecilia's Day, by Dryden and Pope—an extraordinary performance; but he himself conceived the piece not so much as an emotional revelation as a skilful, "brilliant composition" for music. Incidentally he gave impulse to Coleridge ("Kubla Khan") and Keats ("Grecian Urn"); and he closes with a notion of his poem on the Music of the Grecian Theatre, which was evidently to be a more profound and spiritual companion to "The Passions."

Collins's footnotes to the ODE OCCASION'D BY THE DEATH OF MR. THOMSON are:

His airy Harp. The Harp of Æolus, of which see a Description in the Castle of Indolence.

Yon whit'ning Spire. Richmond-Church.

It seems however that Richmond Church had no spire. The "breezy lawn and forest deep" may be interpreted as Richmond Park. The poem is not only an elegy for Thomson, but

also a reminiscence of the society of poets and others who gathered at Richmond with him. " Ease and Health " seem to have been actual persons; see Mallet's " Cupid and Hymen," on a Richmond wedding:

> But lo! already on his way,
> In due observance of the day,
> A friend and favourite of the Nine,
> Who can, but seldom cares to shine,
> And one sole virtue would arrive at—
> To keep his many virtues private;
> Who tends, well pleas'd, yet as by stealth,
> His lov'd companions, Ease and Health. . . .

There is one variant: " grove " occurs in Pearch and Langhorne instead of " grave," in the first line.

The text of the far-reaching Ode on the Popular Superstitions has been fought over many times. The anonymous London editor was a foolish, but I believe an honest man. I do not think he could have invented the passage lacking in the Edinburgh manuscript between stanza IV and the second half of stanza VI. Its historical enthusiasms could only have been produced when the Forty-Five was still recent, and are exactly in Collins's character. The clumsy defects of phrase are also evidences of transcription and not concoction. However, the dubious passages are included above within square brackets.

I have taken up the suggestion of a former editor (1807) in changing the order of the stanzas formerly numbered IX and X. The phrase " such false themes " (XI) could not refer to the common facts of life at St. Kilda, but is in touch with the ghostly monarchs and aërial council. Equally, " *their* rude rocks " must have a retrospective reference, to the inhabitants of St. Kilda.

The variants which seem authentic are:

St. III. " bony swarms."

St. VIII. " Shall seem to press her cold and shudd'ring cheek."

St. VIII. " one hapless thought."

St. IX. " with varied skill."

St. XII. " How have I trembled, when, at Tancred's side,
Like him I stalk'd, and all his passions felt;
When charm'd by Ismen, through the forest wide,
Bark'd in each plant a talking spirit dwelt! "

St. XII. " Hence, sure to charm, his early numbers flow,
{Though strong, yet sweet
{Though faithful, sweet; though strong, of simple kind,
Hence, with each theme, he bids the bosom glow,
While his warm lays an easy passage find,
Pour'd through each inmost nerve, and lull th' harmonious ear."

For the general subject of this Ode, besides the conversations of Home, Collins was partly obliged to two books by Martin Martin: " A late Voyage to St. Kilda," 1698; third edition, 1749; and " A Description of the Western Islands of Scotland," 1703. In 1747 also, David Mallet, one of the Richmond set, had published " Amyntor and Theodora," with acknowledgements to Martin, a panegyric in part on the uncorrupted manners of the people of St. Kilda. Thomson had already, in " Autumn," made a masterly picture of the Hebrides and their myriads of birds, and in the " Castle of Indolence," 1748, he had approached the theme of their superstitions:

As when a shepherd of the Hebrid-Isles,
Plac'd far amid the melancholy main,
(Whether it be lone fancy him beguiles;
Or that aërial beings sometimes deign
To stand, embodied, to our senses plain)
Sees on the naked hill, or valley low,
The whilst in ocean Phoebus dips his wain,
A vast assembly moving to and fro:
Then all at once in air dissolves the wondrous show.

To these add the ancient ballads, which Collins (stanza XIII) hoped he would one day collect.

Home had brought his "tragic song" with him. It contained some signs of the Northern mythology, congenial with Collins's habit of mind. Thus,

> Had I one grain of faith
> In holy legends and religious tales,
> I should conclude there was an arm above
> That fought against me, and malignant turn'd....
>
> Red came the river down, and loud and oft
> The angry spirit of the water shriek'd....

Home was said to have been assisted in "Douglas" by his literary friends. I should think that some of his best lines might have come from Collins.

The "cordial youth" was a young English student named Barrow, who had been imprisoned with Home in the Castle of Doune in 1745, and had escaped with him. He introduced Home to Collins. I am inclined to amend two lines in stanza XIII:

> Meantime, ye powers that own the plains which bore
> The cordial youth, on Lothian's plains attend;

and Home stood in need of them, for his concern with the stage brought him into sad trouble with the presbytery.

In stanza XII, Collins expresses his homage to Tasso and Fairfax, whose translation was reprinted in 1749. In the "Recovery of Jerusalem," Book XIII, are found the incidents, and several of the phrases, concentrated by Collins, *e.g.*:

> Each tree through all that wood
> Hath sense, hath life, hath speech, like human kind,

or,

> A whirling wind his sword heav'd up aloft.

MINOR POEMS

On a Quack Doctor is thus introduced by William Seward in his "Anecdotes": "This great Poet did not often wander

into the gayer and lively scenes of his art. The following Verses by him, on a Quack Doctor of Chichester, are, however, still remembered in that city." (1798.) They appear to be boyish verses.

The SONG of "Young Damon" was brought to light by Henry Headley, the young poet who studied under T. Warton at Trinity College, and who has left one of the prettiest imitations of the "Ode to Evening."

"For the obsequies of Fidele, a SONG was written by my unhappy friend, Mr. William Collins of Chichester, a man of uncommon learning and abilities. I shall give it a place at the end, in honour of his memory." (Johnson, in his "Shakespeare.") In Hawkins's "Life of Johnson" (1787, p. 48) is an ironical reminiscence of Edward Cave foisting his "improvements" upon this song before inserting it in the "Gentleman's Magazine," October 1749.

The poem was set to music by Mr. Rauzzini, "performed with universal applause at the Bath concerts," and published with the music about 1800.

POEMS OF DOUBTFUL AUTHENTICITY

The reader must permit the editor to abbreviate the long process of balancing probabilities concerning these pieces, which are ascribed to Collins on grounds of style, metre, allusion, and other circumstances.

An ODE TO THE PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN occurs in the "Museum" of May 24th 1746. In the following number is the acknowledged Ode on the death of Col. Charles Ross, with which it has some parallels—Cressy, William Duke of Cumberland, and the succession of heroes. There are numerous phrases and symbols in the Ode which remind us of Collins's general work: such a turn as "The Gaul stood wond'ring at his own Success," sends us to "Liberty,"

> The Gaul, 'tis held of antique Story,
> Saw Britain link'd to his own adverse Strand;

and there are many others, which would be tedious here, but,

accumulated, seem to warrant an attribution to the mind of Collins. If not his, the piece may be by his fellow Wykehamist Lowth, whose verse is somewhat similar though of colder influence.

The PROLOGUE TO VENICE PRESERV'D was printed in the "Museum" of May 10th 1746, with an Epilogue on the same occasion. The zeal that Collins had for Otway, joined with several characteristic epithets, adjectives, and images, indicates his authorship of the Prologue. The Epilogue reads like Joseph Warton. Otway was Scholar of Winchester College.

The PROLOGUES and EPILOGUE to Home's "Douglas" are anonymous. Collins's enthusiasm and knowledge of the stage suggest that he would have helped the young author, who was not a polished versifier, with these; and, that being the preliminary position, I think that the historic sketch in each of the Prologues, the reference to the Persia of Aeschylus, the worship of Pity, the allusion to Sidney's "Defence of Poetry," and in the Epilogue the echo of the song in Beaumont and Fletcher, with other significances, may obtain me a licence to print them as possibly by Collins.

Joseph Warton prints the fragment ON THE USE AND ABUSE OF POETRY near the beginning of his "Essay on Pope," vol. i, 1756. In September 1754 he and his brother had been at Chichester, and had seen unpublished manuscripts of Collins. As no such Ode as this appears elsewhere, I am inclined to think it one of those fragments which J. Warton possessed of Collins's "other Odes." In his Essay, finding fault with Pope, he thus puts it forward: "I have lately seen a manuscript ode, entitled 'On the Use and Abuse of Poetry,' in which Orpheus is considered in another and a higher light, according to ancient mythology, as the first legislator and civilizer of mankind. I shall here insert a stanza of it, containing part of what relates to my subject." He concludes: "I am not permitted to transcribe any more, and therefore return to Pope again." With this, and the Wartons' visit to Chichester, and the beautiful, sensitive, and imaginative style of the fragment, and its metrical and expressional consonances with Collins's known work, it is all but certain that Collins is the author.

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